

BBC

GEORGIAN KILLERS WHO CHEATED THE NOOSE

# HISTORY

MAGAZINE

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE

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An  
**American**  
view of  
**Victorian**  
Britain

## VIKING APOCALYPSE

The invasion that spelled doom  
for the Anglo-Saxons

*Lost songs of  
the Holocaust*

BBC  
WORLD  
SERVICE

**Fleeing Idi Amin**

The refugees who  
reshaped 1970s Britain

BBC  
FOUR

**PLUS**

**WHEN WOMEN FOUGHT BACK**

Battling the patriarchy in the 16th century





A smiling man with a family tree overlay and a pie chart showing his genetic heritage. The pie chart is divided into four segments: IRELAND & SCOTLAND (55%), ITALY (16%), ENGLAND, WALES, & NW EUROPE (21%), and NORWAY (8%). The family tree shows a man (Antonio Mancuso) with a woman, and a woman with a man, and a man with a woman. The background is a blurred green field.

IRELAND & SCOTLAND 55%

ITALY 16%

ENGLAND, WALES, & NW EUROPE 21%

NORWAY 8%

Antonio Mancuso  
1875 - 1946

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FEBRUARY 2019

# WELCOME

**BBC**  
**HiSTORY**  
MAGAZINE

“In 1972 the Ugandan leader Idi Amin expelled the country's Asian population. Given just three months to leave, and allowed to take only a small amount of money, **almost 30,000 Ugandan Asians made their way to Britain** to begin a new life. The immigrants encountered hostility and racism, but at the same time many Britons flocked to their aid, providing food and shelter and even lessons in how to take tea. On page 50 of this month's issue, Becky Taylor revisits the events of almost half a century ago and reveals how the Ugandan Asians went on to become one of Britain's immigration 'success stories'.

New arrivals of a far less peaceable kind are the subject of this month's cover feature, which takes us back to the turn of the second millennium. On page 20 Laura Ashe describes the **Viking invasions of the 10th and 11th centuries** through the eyes of the horrified Anglo-Saxon bishop Wulfstan.

Of course, not all visitors to Britain were here to stay, but even the views of tourists can tell us much about past societies. In the early Victorian era, a distinguished American, Elizur Wright, made a lengthy visit to Britain and recorded his experiences of the society, politics and landscape he encountered. On page 30, Richard Sugg shares some insights from this **19th-century Bill Bryson**, offering an outsider's view on everything from the Duke of Wellington to cat food.

I hope you enjoy the issue.

**Rob Attar**  
Editor



## THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



### **Suzannah Lipscomb**

I read over 10,000 pages of often illegible French manuscripts to discover more than 1,200 moral cases that give new insight into the lives of ordinary women living in the 16th century.

● *Suzannah looks into the lives of the female residents of Reformation France on page 36*



### **Becky Taylor**

I've spent the last few years exploring Britain's 'tradition of welcome' of refugees, looking at exactly how German Jews, Poles, Hungarians, Ugandan Asians and Vietnamese were received when they sought refuge here.

● *Becky tells the story of the Ugandan Asians who fled to Britain in the early 1970s on page 50*



### **Richard Sugg**

I was researching the phrase 'The Great Unwashed' for my new book, *Talking Dirty: The History of Disgust*, when I stumbled upon the letters written from Britain by the extraordinary American Elizur Wright. Like history itself, Wright's life was a great adventure.

● *Richard describes an American's verdict on Victorian Britain on page 30*

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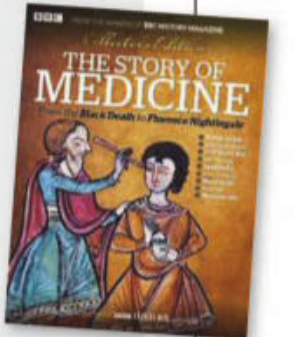
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[bbchistory@buysubscriptions.com](mailto:bbchistory@buysubscriptions.com)

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PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037

[BHicustserv@cdsfulfillment.com](mailto:BHicustserv@cdsfulfillment.com),

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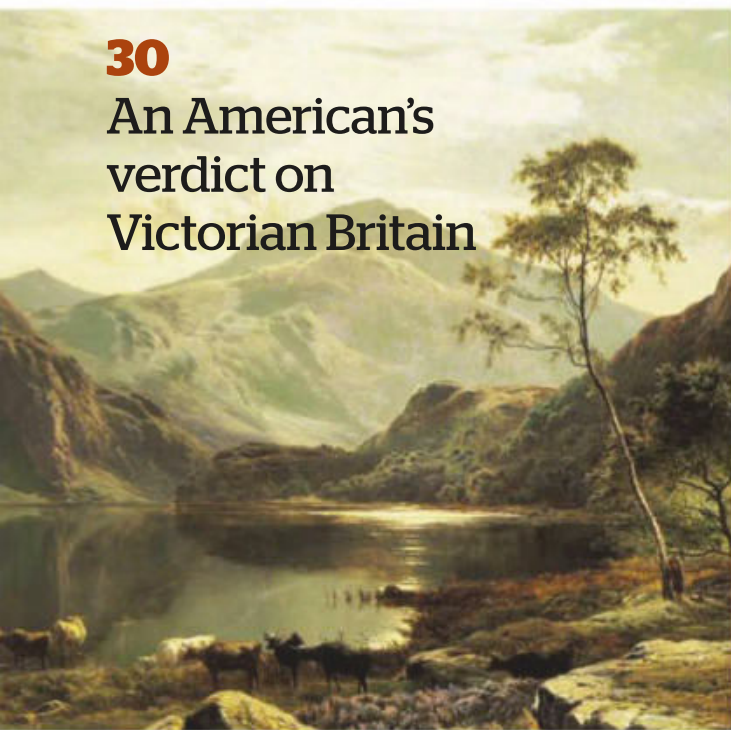


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Were Reformation women more powerful than previously thought?



# ANNIVERSARIES

2 February 1709

## Selkirk is rescued from desert island isolation

*A lucky escape for the marooned privateer who inspired Robinson Crusoe*

**T**he first decade of the 1700s was not a barrel of laughs for Alexander Selkirk. The unruly son of a Scottish tanner, he ran away to sea and became a privateer. Putting in for repairs on a deserted Pacific island in September 1704, he became seriously worried about the state of his ship and told the captain he would rather be left behind than continue on board. The captain promptly set off without him, leaving Selkirk on Más a Tierra, some 420 miles off the coast of Chile. And for the next four and a half years, there he stayed.

Selkirk's life was far from luxurious. He dined on goats, turnips and cabbage leaves, and had to sleep near some feral cats to keep the rats away. He dressed in goatskins, abandoned his shoes and entertained himself by singing psalms.

And then, on 2 February 1709, Selkirk had an incredible stroke of luck.

An English privateer, Woodes Rogers, was sailing nearby when his men spotted smoke from one of the islands. Worried that it might be a Spanish shore party, Rogers sent some men to investigate, and they discovered a "man cloth'd in goat skins, who look'd wilder than the first owners of them". It was Selkirk. "He had so much forgot his Language for want of Use," wrote Rogers, "that we could scarce understand him, for he seem'd to speak his words by halves." Still, he got the hang of it eventually.

The news of Selkirk's ordeal fascinated Britain. And 10 years later, the writer Daniel Defoe turned it into one of the most influential adventure stories of all time: the tale of Robinson Crusoe.



An 18th-century etching imagines what life was like for Alexander Selkirk, who was marooned on Más a Tierra, an island off Chile, for more than four years

12 February 1947

## Dior unveils the 'New Look'

*The fashion house throws austerity out of the window to create an era-defining style*

**T**he date was 12 February 1947, the place the headquarters of the Christian Dior fashion house at 30 Avenue Montaigne, Paris. Having just launched his own house, the eponymous Dior was desperate to make a splash. After years of wartime austerity, he thought, fashion badly needed a dash of glamour, turning its back on the privations of the last decade.

Instead of the boxy silhouettes so popular in the early 1940s, Dior's outfits were voluptuous and curvaceous, with boned, busty bodices, tiny waists and long, wide, sweeping skirts. Given the pinched feel of the last few years, the effect could hardly have been more spectacular. Dior himself boasted that he had "designed flower women", and the collection was entitled Corolle, meaning a circlet of flower petals.

When Dior's models walked out, some of the fashion journalists gasped. "It's such a new look!" exclaimed the editor of *Harper's Bazaar*, Carmel Snow. From that moment, Dior's style became known as the New Look. Some women complained because the long dresses covered up their legs, and some commentators thought it unforgivably wasteful to spend so much money on fabric at a time when much of Europe, including France itself, was in ruins.

But Dior had accurately judged the mood. Ordinary consumers were desperate for some romantic escapism, and the self-consciously elegant New Look set the tone, on both sides of the Atlantic, until well into the 1950s. Not everybody liked it, though. "Only a man who never was intimate with a woman," sniffed Coco Chanel, "could design something that uncomfortable."

TOP PHOTO



**Dominic Sandbrook** is a historian and broadcaster. He has presented numerous programmes on BBC TV and radio



A woman models Dior's 'New Look' in 1947. The style raised eyebrows in an era of postwar austerity



BRIDGEMAN





**12 February 1502**

The Castilian ruler **Isabella I** **outlaws Islam** in her newly conquered possessions, effectively forcing Spain's Muslims to convert to Christianity.

**20 February 1547**

At the age of just nine, **Edward VI** is crowned king of **England** at Westminster Abbey, and has his dinner while still proudly wearing his crown.



**19 February 1942**

In Darwin, Australia, Japanese warplanes and bombers **launch a devastating air raid**, killing at least 243 people.



A 1493 woodcut, said to be the earliest depiction of Christopher Columbus, shows the Genoese seaman reaching land in his ship the *Santa María*. In the foreground King Ferdinand II of Aragon – who funded the trip – points the way

**15 February 1493**

## Columbus announces his 'discovery' of the Americas

*The explorer's letter sparks an age of colonisation*

**W**hen Christopher Columbus put pen to paper on 15 February 1493, even he could scarcely have imagined that he was writing one of the most important letters in history. The previous August, the Genoese seaman had set sail from Spain, hoping to find a route to the Indies across the Atlantic. Now, returning home with empty ships, he was keen to mollify his financial backers with news

of his extraordinary discoveries.

According to Columbus, he had reached the Indies, "all of which I took possession for our Highnesses, with proclaiming heralds and flying royal standards, and no one objecting". The natives, he reported, were cowardly and half-dressed, "like beasts", and ripe for conquest. Indeed, he was at pains to portray the islands as a paradise of natural resources, "very suitable for

planting and cultivating", with "many spices, and great mines of gold and other metals".

The most eye-catching part of Columbus's famous letter was his warning that "monsters" might be lurking somewhere in the Indies. The natives had told him of long-haired cannibals who ate human flesh. But that, he added, should not put his backers off. If the Spanish monarchs continued to support him, there was no limit to the wealth they might gain.

Columbus's letter was a sensation, and news soon spread far and wide. Within weeks, a Spanish version was being printed in Barcelona, and within a year, different Latin versions had been printed in Rome, Paris, Basel and Antwerp. By 1500, some 3,000 copies were circulating across Europe. The age of colonisation had begun.



27 February 380

## The Roman empire embraces Christianity

*The Edict of Thessalonica ushers in a new state religion – and denounces heretics*

**T**owards the end of the fourth century, the Roman empire was a place of tremendous religious ferment. After a long expansion in the empire's cities, Christianity had received an enormous boost from Constantine the Great, who legalised it in AD 313 and raised it to the first rank of imperial religions. But Christianity itself was seized with bitter dissension, with rival Nicene and Arian bishops arguing about whether Jesus was of the same substance as God, had been created by him, or was merely a man.

So on 27 February 380, the emperors Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I, joint rulers of the vastly over-stretched Roman world, decided to impose some clarity. "It is our desire,"



A late fourth-century Roman mosaic showing Jesus with the apostles. After years of growth across the empire, Christianity was elevated to the first rank of imperial religions in 380

began their Edict of Thessalonica, "that all the various nations which are subject to our clemency and moderation, should continue to profess that religion which was delivered to the Romans by the divine apostle Peter."

In other words, Christianity was now the official state religion of the Roman empire. But which kind of Christianity? "Let us believe," the edict went on, "in the one deity of the Father, the Son

and the Holy Spirit, in equal majesty and in a holy trinity. We authorise the followers of this law to assume the title of Catholic Christians; but as for the others, since, in our judgment they are foolish madmen, we decree that they shall be branded with the ignominious name of heretics, and shall not presume to give to their conventicles the name of churches."

But that, of course, did not stop the arguing. **H**

### COMMENT / Daniel Reynolds

#### "The Edict of Thessalonica fundamentally transformed the late Roman empire"

**“** Although the Edict of Thessalonica provoked no immediate change, its rulings fundamentally transformed the late Roman empire over the following century. Most importantly, it made religious belief a matter of law and offered one of the earliest uses of the term 'heretic'. Differences of religious opinion and interpretation had existed long before AD 380, but the edict made heresy a criminal act. This did not just affect Christians who didn't subscribe to Nicene Christianity, but also Jews and adherents to traditional Roman cults. Elites increasingly turned to Christianity as a way of

legitimising their public status. Family structures, attitudes to sex and even calendars were also gradually adapted in response to the growing influence of Christian morality and social custom.

Christianity took hold in the empire's physical spaces too. Temples dedicated to non-Christian cults were forcibly closed and eclipsed by the growing importance of churches in ritual and public life. Churches also became the focus of vast imperial building projects; and, as an institution, the church offered a rival avenue to power. Bishops, priests and monks became increasingly visible

figures in matters of legal governance, public building and land management.

Crucially, these structures would outlast the breakdown of centralised Roman authority in the west in the fifth century. **”**



**Daniel Reynolds** is a lecturer in Byzantine history at the University of Birmingham. He is currently working on a book, *Forging the Christian Holy Land*





# A legacy in action

FROM ITS WORK IN ITALY DURING WWII TO SENDING FOOD PARCELS TO SYRIA, THE BRITISH RED CROSS IS ALWAYS THERE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN NEED

In September 1943, the Western Allies launched the invasion of Italy, and in January 1944 (75 years ago this month) the British Red Cross arrived in the country. Its teams initially focused on civilian relief services, but as the war progressed, they were divided into 'spearhead' and 'follow-up' units. The spearhead teams distributed first aid kits and relief supplies, established emergency refugee centres, evacuated wounded civilians and helped to rebuild local voluntary aid societies. The follow-up units assisted refugees, helped to reorganise civilian hospitals and convalescent homes and reported on hygiene and sanitation.

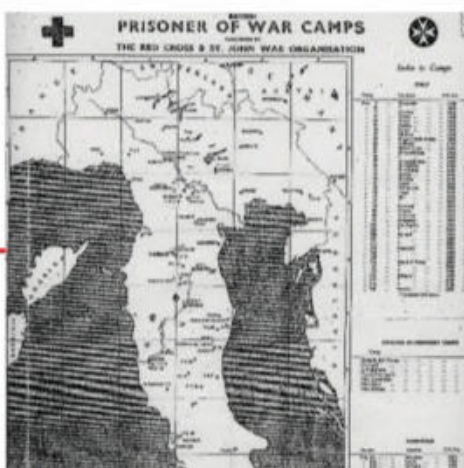
As the war progressed, Italy became an important location for repatriating Allied prisoners of war. The British Red Cross worked

closely with the International Committee of the Red Cross to offer support to Allied PoWs throughout WWII. The charity packed more than 19 million food relief parcels, helped to send off book and next-of-kin parcels and supplied 'comforts' such as clothing, soap and shaving kits. It also played a key role in supporting liberated PoWs as they waited to return home.

Exactly 75 years later, the work carried out by the British Red Cross is just as essential. It continues to send help to people in conflict zones such as Syria, to which more than 580,000 food items and 1.5 million non-food items, including mattresses, blankets and tarpaulins, have been supplied since the country's civil war began.

## LEAVE YOUR OWN LEGACY

Only through the generosity of supporters can the British Red Cross always be ready to help those in crisis – whether they're on the other side of the world or on your own street. By leaving a gift in your will, you can leave your own legacy and ensure this vital charity can support vulnerable people for many years to come.



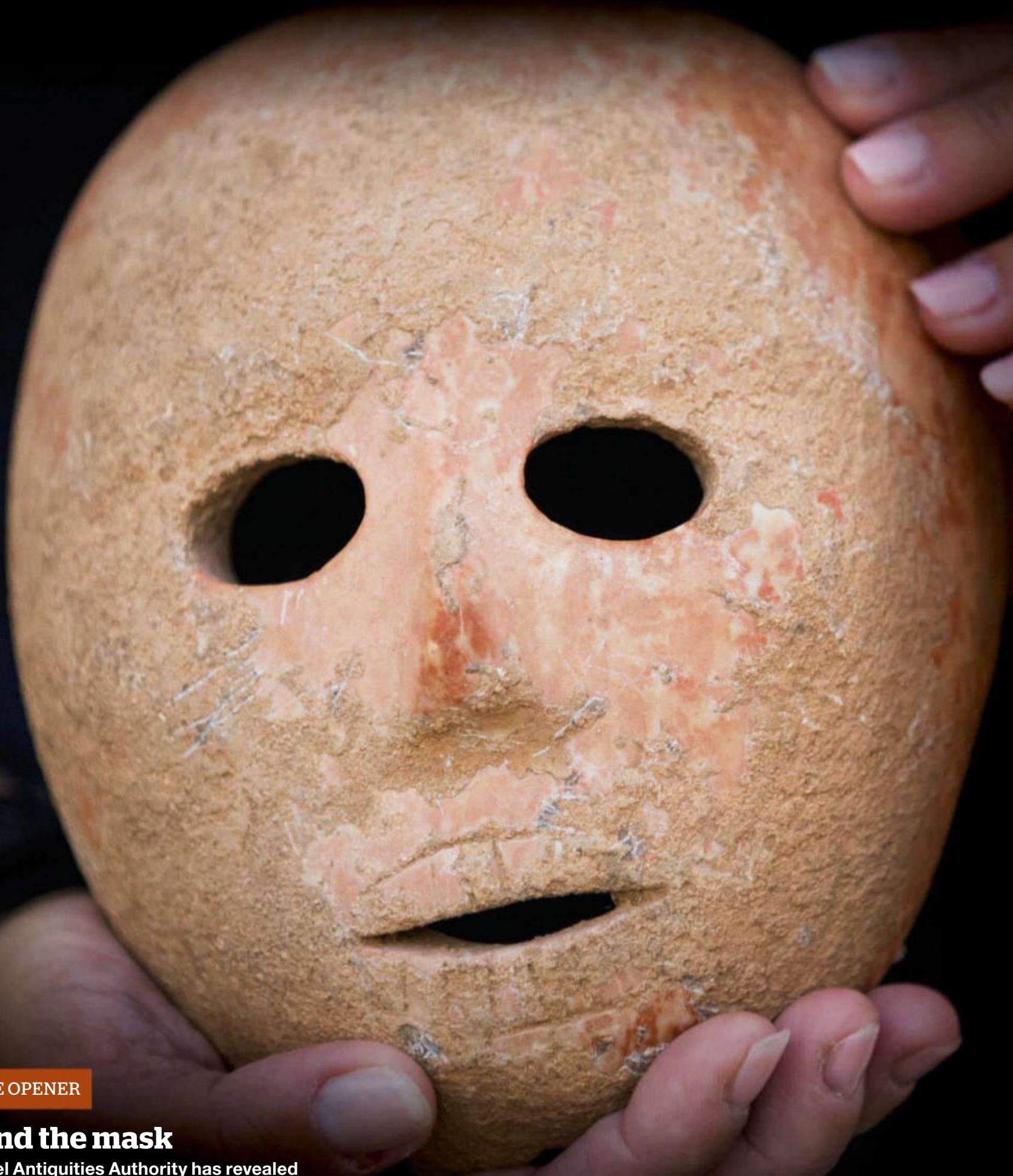
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The latest news, plus **Backgrounder 14** Past notes **16**

# HISTORY NOW

Have a story? Please email Charlotte Hodgman at [charlotte.hodgman@immediate.co.uk](mailto:charlotte.hodgman@immediate.co.uk)



**EYE OPENER**

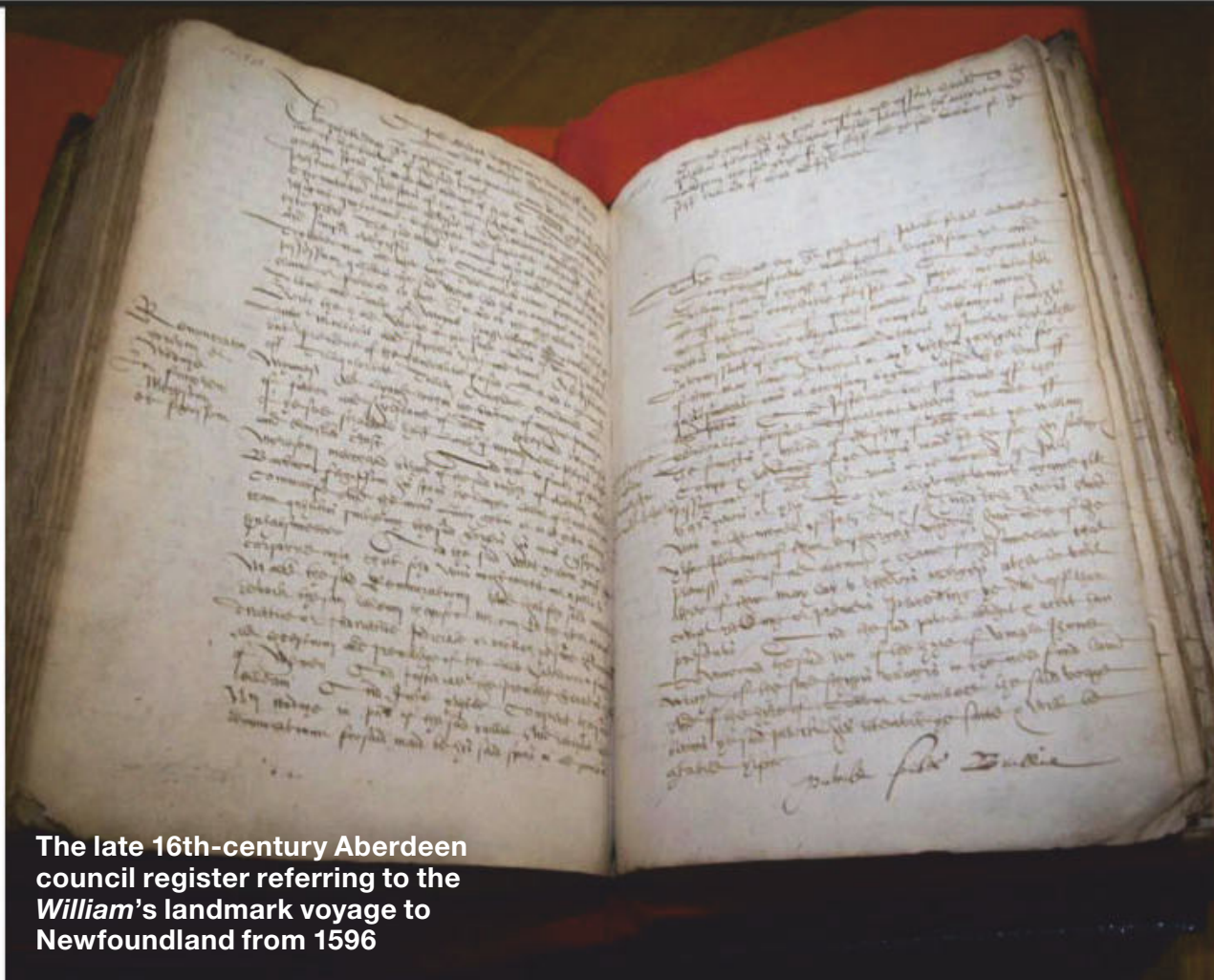
## Behind the mask

The Israel Antiquities Authority has revealed a 9,000-year-old stone mask, found several months ago near the settlement of Pnei Hever in the southern West Bank. The mask, made from pink and yellow stone, is one of only 16 examples known to exist. Holes drilled around the circumference suggest the mask may have been designed to be tied to a face or an object, and could have been worn as part of ritualistic ancestor worship.



SCOTTISH MARITIME HISTORY

“Many of these New World seamen would not have seen their families for a number of years”



The late 16th-century Aberdeen council register referring to the William’s landmark voyage to Newfoundland from 1596



Evidence of the earliest documented Scottish ship to sail the Atlantic has been located in a council register from the 16th century. **Thomas Brochard** (left), who made the discovery, explains the significance of the find

**Why is this discovery so important?**  
This is a ‘first’ for Scotland. Entries in a register of council minutes for Aberdeen – referencing a vessel called *William*, which sailed from Aberdeen to Newfoundland in 1596 – provide the earliest surviving evidence of a Scottish ship to cross the Atlantic to date. Before that, the earliest evidence we had for a Scottish vessel making a voyage to North America was for a Dundee ship named the *Grace of God*, which sailed from Portugal in 1600.

**How much do we know about the William’s Atlantic crossing?**  
Details of the route and chronology of the crossing remain elusive. From another source uncovered by historian Arkady Hodge, we know that, during its landmark voyage, the *William* shipped back to the Clyde and entered a cargo of French wine for the payment of customs on 28 April 1597. The ship’s subsequent route is un-

known until April 1600, when it landed at the Portuguese port of Aveiro (south of Porto).  
**Why did the William sail to Newfoundland?**  
We don’t know for certain, but it seems safe to assume that these Scots sailed to Newfoundland to fish for cod in the waters off its coasts. Basque, English, Portuguese, French and Spanish crews had visited the area with their fishing vessels on a seasonal basis since the early 16th century. These fishermen had also developed techniques to preserve the fish for the return journey to Europe.

**What can you tell us about the men who funded and crewed the William?**  
The Aberdeen council minutes shed a little light on the men responsible for the *William*’s voyage across the Atlantic. The ship’s master and skipper was a man named William Findlay – we know that because he

is mentioned in records referring to share-owners appearing in front of the local burgh court in May 1601 to settle debts incurred during the “voagis in the new fund land”.  
The other partners and owners in the Newfoundland venture are given as burgess Alexander Kempt, an Archibald Smith and the ship’s clerk, Patrick Donaldson Younger.  
The records reveal that Donaldson, Findlay, Kempt, and almost certainly Smith, were involved in “The frauchtis & outred”, that is the freighting and fitting-out, of the vessel for its voyage across the Atlantic.

**For how long would seamen have been away from home during these Atlantic crossings?**  
The *William* left Aberdeen in July 1596 and returned four years later, in July 1600 – so many New World seamen would not have seen their families for a number of years. The voyages of the *William* and *Grace of God* show us that New World ships did a long loop home on their return to Scotland, stopping at various ports en route. Further studies of the trading links with the Iberian peninsula are pivotal to finding out more about these early Atlantic crossings.

**Thomas Brochard** is an honorary research fellow at the University of Aberdeen

NORMAN ADAMS-ABERDEEN COUNTY COUNCIL





## A good month for...

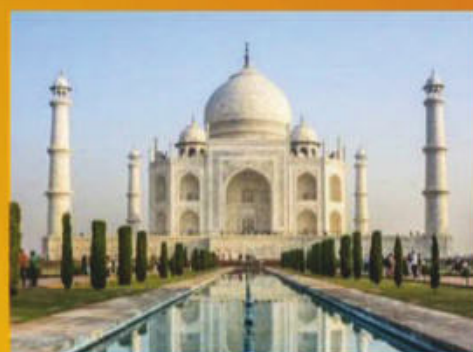
### MEAD DRINKERS

Production of mead – an alcoholic drink fermented with honey, which can be traced back 9,000 years – is on the increase, according to several producers of the beverage. The drink first became popular in ancient Europe before the development of wine making.

### VICTORIAN DINOSAURS

Slash, the lead guitarist from Guns N' Roses, has joined a campaign to raise funds to build a bridge to an island in Crystal Palace Park that holds a group of 165-year-old dinosaur sculptures. The bridge would mean the sculptures could be visited and maintained.

## A bad month for...



### INDIAN TOURISTS

Indian visitors to the Taj Mahal have seen ticket prices increase by 400 per cent – from 50 rupees (55p) to 250 rupees (£2.80) – in a bid to limit footfall to the 17th-century mausoleum.

## HISTORY NEWS ROUND-UP

A selection of the stories that have been hitting the history headlines



The remains of the medieval man, complete with leather boots

### Remains of leather-booted medieval man found

Archaeologists working on the Thames Tideway tunnel in Bermondsey have unearthed the remains of a man thought to have fallen to his death in the river 500 years ago. Found lying on its front, with its head twisted to the side, the skeleton was found to be wearing a pair of remarkably preserved knee-high leather boots, stitched together with waxed flax thread. The wearer of the boots may have been a dock worker such as a fisherman or mudlark.

### Campaign to see BME figure on £50 note

More than 200 public figures have backed a campaign to see a black and minority ethnic (BME) historical figure on the new £50 note. Those who joined the campaign include Lord Victor Adebawale, comedian Sanjeev Bhaskar and Baroness Sayeeda Warsi. Suggested BME figures for the banknote are Britain's first Muslim war heroine, Noor Inayat Khan, and Crimean War nurse Mary Seacole. The final choice will be announced this year.



Noor Inayat Khan is among several BME women suggested for the new £50 note



The clove discovered at Mantai (top), and (below) peppercorns found at the site

### Ancient clove and pepper found in Sri Lanka

A rare sample of clove dating back to AD 900–1100, and eight samples of charred black pepper from AD 600–700, have been discovered at the site of an ancient port in Mantai, Sri Lanka. Archaeologists from UCL, who made the discovery, believe the clove predates most other finds of cloves from outside south Asia by around 500 years. The find also suggests that the exotic spice trade in the region dates back to as early as AD 600.

### Stone Age farmers wiped out by ancient plague?

A new strain of plague extracted from the genetic material of a 20-year-old Neolithic woman in Sweden could explain the decline of Europe's Stone Age farmers around 5,000 years ago. The ancient bacteria is thought to be the closest thing ever identified to the origin of the disease and may have spread through farming communities during the massive migrations from the Eurasian steppes to Europe that took place at this time.



The site that contains the bones of the 5,000-year-old plague victim



## The historians' view...

# Has the daily commute always been a chore?

As commuters bewail traffic jams, delays and rising fares, two experts explore the long history of travelling to work and consider the challenges and opportunities presented by the car revolution

Compiled by **Chris Bowlby**, a BBC journalist specialising in history

“Commute times rose by 50 per cent in the 20th century. We're working less than 100 years ago, but spending longer getting to and from work

**DR RACHEL ALDRED**

**F**or most of human history, people have had to travel on foot. For settled populations, this has meant that work (however organised) needed to be relatively local to home. I would stress relatively local: I remember visiting the Peak District and doing what I felt was a pretty strenuous climb up a large hill and back down the other side, before realising that 19th-century workers were climbing over the same hill twice a day, before and after work!

Although workers then may have been more accustomed to longer walks than we are today, reliance on walking limited the extent to which home and work could slip apart. A two-mile walk might have been possible, but eight miles (today's average

commuting distance) would have been much less practical on foot – especially given the long working hours, which averaged around 54 hours a week in 1870, compared with 37 now. As soon as people could be expected to travel by other forms of transport, that distance could grow – and it did. In the UK, most people still walked to work during the 1930s, but for some the bicycle had already expanded the range of possible commute distances.

Since the 19th century, London has been different, with the suburban rail network and other public transport providing a basis for spatial expansion and agglomeration that simply didn't exist in other towns and cities. During the 'bike boom' of the early 20th century, Londoners didn't take to cycling as commuters in other parts of the country did, with many in the capital instead using rail, trams, buses and trolleybuses to get to work.

London public transport often hit the headlines in the past – as it does now – with debates over the need to introduce 'workman's fares' for early-morning Tube travellers in the 19th century. The concentration of power, wealth and influence in the city has encouraged this, with many national decision-makers themselves affected by its transport system.

Substantial inequalities, both geographical and social, in access to transport govern what people are able to do, what they can earn, and how much goods and services cost

them. Although the gap has narrowed, women still tend to drive less and use the bus more than men. We know that women tend to have shorter commutes than men, partly because they still have much greater caring responsibilities. This has helped to reduce women's choice of work, and hence their earnings and potential for advancement relative to men.

Overall, we're working less than our ancestors did 100 years ago, but spending longer getting to and from work. Time spent commuting rose by an estimated 50 per cent during the 20th century. And given the shift from walking, cycling and public transport to car use, most people are no longer getting healthy exercise from their journey to work. Instead, it is harming us. This affects both people outside cars and drivers themselves, who inhale toxic air pollution and spend their commuting time almost completely sedentary – which we now know is actively harmful to health.

But perhaps we shouldn't hope for a historic reversal and the decline of the commute. If we can make it healthy, the journey to work could be our best hope for turning around our physical inactivity crisis.



**Rachel Aldred** is a reader in transport at the University of Westminster







**Broad Street railway station in London, c1890.**  
In the late 19th and early 20th century, Londoners opted for suburban trains and other public transport over bicycles



**Farm labourers in Horsham, Sussex,**  
heading home with their tools after a 17-hour shift in July 1947



**A traffic jam on the M25.** After the UK's first motorways opened in the late 1950s, car commutes became increasingly common

“Vehicle ownership made it possible for the middle classes, who worked in towns and cities, to move to more rural locations

**PROFESSOR SEAN O'CONNELL**

**W**e might assume that 20th-century commuting was dictated largely by mass car ownership, but the reality was more complex. UK car ownership levels spread less rapidly than in the United States, with around 2 million cars on British roads by 1939. Motorists were drawn from the most affluent families and did not necessarily use the car for their journey to work. The car's flexibility contrasted sharply with public transport and the bicycle, but this advantage was less apparent during rush-hour journeys into city or town centres, along congested roads that were often in poor condition.

The UK was slower than the US, Germany or Italy in building motorways. The M1 was not opened until 1959, over two decades after Germany's first autobahn attracted

admiring British motorists. Before 1939, car sales to business users represented 25–40 per cent of the total, indicating that the majority were bought for leisure purposes. Even in the 1960s, most prospective buyers were more excited by the leisure potential of cars than their commuting convenience.

In the countryside, the car's transformative effect on travelling to work was evident sooner. Vehicle ownership made it possible for the middle classes, who worked in towns and cities, to move from urban and suburban homes to more rural locations. After decades of depopulation, in the 1930s the population in rural England and Wales increased. It's no coincidence that adult daughters in farming families were more likely to be encouraged to take the steering wheel. For rural families, the benefits of having a driving daughter (or wife) outweighed the mythology about the 'woman driver' and her alleged incompetence.

In urban society, the impact of this mythology was demonstrated by long-lasting gender disparities in licence-holding. In the mid-1960s, 13 per cent of women held a driving licence compared with 56 per cent of men; in the 1970s that narrowed to 30 per cent and 68 per cent respectively. However, the rise in female licence carriers wasn't matched by a rise in commuter numbers because – with men having first call on most family cars – women were less likely to drive to work than their male counterparts.

In the late 20th century, commuting by car became more common, and its costs – in terms of congestion, pollution and the loss of physical exercise – became more apparent. There was a steep decline in cycling to school and work between the 1950s and late 1960s as roads became dominated by motor traffic. This owed much to the powerful motoring lobby, including the Automobile Association, which was founded in 1905 to thwart police speed traps. Other supporters in politics and the media trumpeted the advantages of the 'car-owning democracy'.

The recent travails of rail commuters stranded in various parts of Britain suggest public transport commuters could use a lobbying group with the effectiveness of the AA. They might, though, take some heart from the return of cycling commuters to Britain's roads, with bicycle sales at more than 2.5 million a year. **H**



**Sean O'Connell** is professor of modern British and Irish social history at Queen's University Belfast. He is currently writing *Joyriding: A History* (Palgrave)

#### DISCOVER MORE

##### BOOKS

► **The Car in British Society**  
by Sean O'Connell (MUP, 1998)

► **The Routledge Handbook of Mobilities**  
(Routledge, 2017)



**OLD NEWS***A beginner's guide to camel riding***Lichfield Mercury**  
**14 November 1879**

**Y**ou might wonder what the inhabitants of the bustling town of Lichfield knew about camels in 1879. But the absence of these huge even-toed ungulates from the native fauna didn't stop the editors of the *Lichfield Mercury* from making sure their readers would be prepared should they ever encounter a camel in Staffordshire. Under the heading 'Camel Riding' came a short, clear and concise guide on how to mount – and more importantly stay on – your camel, which claimed to have “some sweet surprises for the novice”.

Readers were told to seat themselves in the broad saddle and cross their legs in front of the pommel, and then to expect the unexpected: “Before you are ready, something like a private earthquake begins under you. The camel raises his hindquarters suddenly, and throws you over upon his neck; and before you recover from that, he straightens up his knees and gives you a jerk over his tail; and, while you are not at all certain what has happened, he begins to move off with that dislocated walk which sets you in to a see-saw motion.” As of today, camel-riding has yet to become a well known pastime for Lichfieldians.

Story sourced from [britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) and rediscovered by **Fern Riddell**. Fern regularly appears on BBC Radio 3's *Free Thinking*

**PAST NOTES**  
**BEATLEMANIA**

Fans besiege the Beatles' New York hotel during their tour of America, 1964

To mark 50 years since the Fab Four's last live performance, **Julian Humphrys** explores the history of Beatlemania

**Who came up with the term Beatlemania?**

Scottish music promoter Andi Lothian is the most likely candidate. He recalled that when a Radio Scotland reporter, bemused at the pandemonium surrounding a Beatles gig in October 1963, asked him what was going on, he replied: “Don't worry, it's only Beatlemania.” The term appeared in print a few weeks later, after the Beatles had played the prestigious *Sunday Night at the London Palladium* TV show.

**What caused it?**

The baby boom meant there were more teenagers than ever before. Many looked for a shared identity and a way of expressing their taste and sexuality, and the Beatles, with their musical chops and carefully crafted image, were ideally placed to cash in. TV appearances were vital in spreading their popularity. When the band first appeared on the *The Ed Sullivan Show* at the start of their 1964 US tour, an estimated 73 million tuned in.

**Was it the first 'mania' of its kind?**

Although it was unprecedented in its

scale, Beatlemania wasn't the first. In 1844, German writer Heinrich Heine coined the term 'Lisztomania' to describe the fan frenzy inspired by Hungarian composer Franz Liszt. A century later, when Frank Sinatra began his residency at New York's Paramount Theatre in October 1944, thousands of teenage girls rampaged through Times Square.

**What killed off Beatlemania?**

The Beatles killed it off themselves. Frustrated at being unable to reproduce their complex studio sound, and by the fact that they were barely audible above the screaming, the Beatles fell out of love with performing. Their 1966 US tour was the final straw. It took place against a backdrop of death threats after an interview in which, commenting on the state of modern Christianity, John Lennon said the Beatles were “more popular than Jesus”. Their final show took place in front of 25,000 people at San Francisco's Candlestick Park on 29 August 1966. They would only perform live once more: on the roof of the Apple Building in London's Savile Row on 30 January 1969. **H**





## Michael Wood on... **Anglo-Saxon manuscripts**

**“It was a time of great violence and cruelty – but beauty too”**

“I cycle to the office every day past the British Library, and recently I’ve been feeling a bit doleful seeing the huge poster for the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms exhibition, with the fourth and final month drawing to a close. I was on the planning committee, and unbelievably, looking at my emails, it was well over four years ago that the curator, Claire Breay, mailed her early thoughts about the exhibition. That’s how long it takes to create a show like this. I remember the first meeting in early 2015 to think about what we might hope to see in it. Not just the stars – *Beowulf*, the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, *Domesday* – but texts and artefacts that illuminate social history or provide insights into women’s lives, like Wynflaed’s will: the first for a woman in our history. We talked about how to weave in other parts of the British Isles, and how pivotal Europe was to the whole story. You can imagine how hard it was to whittle hundreds of ideas down to the 180 treasures that finally made it.

The response has been terrific. Numbers of visitors have greatly exceeded all forecasts. Twitter has been humming with delight; and the reviews were great: “By far the most important exhibition you’ll see this winter,” said one. Another paper suggested the BL was underselling the exhibition to call it “once in a generation”: it was once in a lifetime. Where else could you see the greatest productions of over 500 years of our island story in one place? And it is unlikely to happen again any time soon: the *Codex Amiatinus* – the oldest complete Latin Bible, produced at Wearmouth in around AD 700 – hasn’t been back to these shores since it left for Italy in 716.

So, with not long to go, I went back the other day and took a moment to reflect on why it had struck such a chord. Why, in these gloomy times – overshadowed by Brexit, fraught with questions about national identity, regionally divided – should it have found such a response? After all, these wonderful manuscripts and treasures are products of a violent, unequal and superstitious era.

Maybe that in part is the appeal. There is a whiff of

*Game of Thrones* or *Vikings* about it: when men were men, but women could also be leaders of kingdoms and armies. There’s nothing fantasy history likes better than charismatic women in burnished chain mail; the real Lady of the Mercians may not have been like the feisty heroine of *The Last Kingdom*, but she sure worked on TV.

It was a time of violence and cruelty – a hierarchical society where most people were poor and/or unfree, with slaves comprising maybe 20 per cent of the population. And yet, in the BL show, you can see the huge effort men and women made to try to build just societies, to transmit culture and learning and to create beauty. And all of it was done in self-effacing loyalty to the past, and to a dream of Christian civilisation.

In my days as a graduate student, when we studied the so-called ‘Dark Ages’, one of our academic heroes was Arnaldo Momigliano – a great teacher of what came to be known as Late Antiquity, who made us look at history in a different way, breaking down narrow views of cultures and periods. Like Primo Levi, Momigliano came from Italy’s Piedmont region, close to Turin, where he first taught until the Fascist anti-Jewish laws drove him out in 1938. He took refuge in England, where he lectured at UCL and made his name as one of the great 20th-century historians, always believing that the study of the past gives value and meaning to our present.

Momigliano was especially interested in the sixth and seventh centuries, that ‘Age of Iron’ after the fall of Rome, and the people who created libraries and copied manuscripts to pass on the traditions of classical and Christian Latin civilisation. Having witnessed European civilisation descend into the Holocaust, he wrote: “We who have lived through our own Age of Iron have learned not to disdain the lesser people, those who did not disdain the task of elementary education when elementary education was what was needed.” And that, surely, is what the *Codex Amiatinus* stands for. The effort of civilisation. The people who built up from the bottom. And in some distant, magical way, that was us. ■

### Michael Wood

is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. He has presented numerous BBC series, and his books include *The Story of England* (Viking, 2010)

**BBC**



ILLUSTRATION BY FEMKE DE JONG



# LETTERS

## The Peterloo divide

I write in response to your recent article *Peterloo* (December). I have two relatives who were in different political camps regarding the massacre. And their differences seem to have stemmed from their economic circumstances. David Bellhouse (1764–1840) and George Bellhouse (c1769–1825) were both born in Leeds, younger sons of a Leeds joiner. Both took up their father's trade. There the similarities end. David Bellhouse moved to Manchester in the 1780s, where he initially worked as a joiner. Soon he speculated successfully in workers' housing. By 1819, he had become a wealthy businessman running a timber yard, a building and contracting business and a cotton-spinning factory.

On his father's death in 1796, George Bellhouse took over the joinery business in Leeds but it failed in the early 19th century, whereupon he also moved to Manchester to

work as a joiner. He never enjoyed his brother's financial success. George was at the Peterloo meeting on 16 August 1819. Afterwards, along with several others, he signed a statement protesting against the violence on the part of the army and maintaining that the meeting was peaceable. Brother David, in the opposite camp, signed a petition calling for more law and order after Peterloo. These appeared in the *Manchester Mercury* on 7 September and 19 October 1819 respectively.

**David Bellhouse, Ontario**

● We reward the Letter of the Month writer with our book of the month. In this issue that is *Unquiet Women: From the Dusk of the Roman Empire to the Dawn of the Enlightenment* by Max Adams. See page 71

LETTER  
OF THE  
MONTH

same issue that we should “widen the taught history curriculum in schools to reflect the diversity of our society and human histories”. However, while we embrace this width in certain areas, it seems that we are narrowing it in others.

**Mary Ann Pledge, Devon**

## Overblown myths

Congratulations to Nick Hewitt for pointing out a few home truths about the Battle of Britain (*The Forgotten Battle of Britain*, January). Sadly, if previous revisionism is anything to go by, his views will have as little permanence as sandcastles on the beach.

How many people now remember the work of Duncan Grinnell-Milne in 1958 or Wing Commander Hubert Allen DFC in 1974, to mention just two authors with a similar argument? In reality, Winston Churchill cynically subverted the story of our finest hour to suit a Conservative political agenda, and before the conflict ended had successfully placed almost the entire credit for survival with a small pilot elite, enabling the Royal Air Force to ‘own the battle’ by 1945. No place any more, then, for sailors, soldiers, emergency workers or civilians ‘taking it’. Government and media agencies enthusiastically cooperated, with the result that most journalists and members of the public still unquestioningly accept the story rolled out by Churchill and the Air Ministry.

Mostly, this is because the myths make a wonderfully inspiring story, while emphasising how lone pilots battled impossible odds and stopped the invasion plays to our sense of Britishness.

It may be a sound sentiment, but one that makes us all vulnerable to the overblown claims of those in sections of the British political class, industry, academia and the RAF with self-serving motives for keeping the myths alive. Why do historians bother?

**Anthony J Cumming, Devon**

## Aerial view

I yield to no one in my admiration and respect for the Senior Service, but I cannot agree with the thesis put forward by Nick Hewitt that the naval victories in Norway were of greater importance than

## The full spectrum

I read Michael Wood's column on diversity in history education (*Comment*, Christmas issue) and found myself agreeing loudly with everything. At secondary school in the 1990s, I recall the subject matter (although interesting to me) was in no way diverse or inclusive for my BAME classmates. It was only while studying history at university that I was able to pick a module (just the one, though) that centred on the lives and experiences of black Africans in Zimbabwe and South Africa, and was very glad I had. I'm hopeful that my children will experience a more rounded, inclusive and diverse history education that matches their world.

**Sarah Mountford, London**

## Christmas future

I write in response to Julian Humphrys' article on nativity plays (Christmas), where he refers to the harassed teacher of five-year-olds finding parts in the school nativity. Would that this were still typical of a ‘Christmas’ term! In many primary schools today, nativities don't take place for fear of causing offence to

those from different beliefs and cultures.

On a wider note, it seems odd that while the histories and practices of a variety of religions are studied as part of the British curriculum, Bible stories and Christian events are sometimes considered too controversial to be included. I would contend that this stops our children gaining a rounded contextual basis through which to view much of our history. Michael Wood states correctly in his comment piece in the



Changing the subject... has diversity in the British curriculum gone far enough?

ILLUSTRATION BY FEMKE DE JONG





**HMS Repulse (front) and HMS Prince of Wales (rear) are sunk by Japanese aircraft in 1941. Reader Colin Bullen says air superiority was key in the Second World War**

the Battle of Britain in preventing an invasion of these islands.

If the RAF had succumbed, then the naval ports and dockyards of southern England would have been destroyed by the Luftwaffe but, even more importantly, the great ships of the Royal Navy would have suffered the same fate as US battleships at Pearl Harbor, and HMS *Repulse* and HMS *Prince of Wales*, sunk by air attack three days later.

The Pacific War, at Midway and Leyte Gulf, clearly showed that air superiority rendered capital ships impotent, illustrated by the fact that the greatest battleship ever built, the Japanese *Yamato*, was destroyed by air attack.

The British Home Fleet would have been unable to protect our island for more than a short time before being shattered by the Luftwaffe. As Churchill said, it was the RAF that saved us.

**Colin Bullen, Kent**

### Union dues

I enjoyed Jacob Rees-Mogg's *My History Hero* feature about Benjamin Disraeli (Christmas). However, I think his projection of how Disraeli would feel about Brexit fails, inevitably, to address the fact that Disraeli was living in a different world, where Britain was at the centre of a world empire, whose world trading rights were defended by a powerful army and navy.

Since those halcyon days, Britain's empire has collapsed, our armed forces have been pared to the bone and Europe itself has changed.

After being ravaged by two world wars, the continent has rebuilt itself into a mutually supportive union – a trading and political partnership. Certainly there have been issues: nothing is perfectly formed. But personally, I would hope that a modern Disraeli might have the perspective and the prescience to realise that, in the 21st century, continued membership of the European Union is the better way forward.

**Alan Gidney, North Lincolnshire**

### Corrections

● In November's *Anniversaries*, we implied that John F Kennedy's funeral took place in the National Cathedral. As several readers have pointed out, it was actually held at St Matthew's Cathedral in Washington, DC.

### WRITE TO US

We welcome your letters, while reserving the right to edit them. We may publish your letters on our website. Please include a daytime phone number and, if emailing, a postal address (not for publication). Letters should be no longer than 250 words.

**email:** letters@historyextra.com

**Post:** Letters, *BBC History Magazine*, Immediate Media Company Bristol Ltd, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN

## SOCIAL MEDIA

What you've been saying on Twitter and Facebook



**Following the BBC's recent restaging of Victoria and Albert's wedding, we asked: which other event from history would you like to see recreated?**

**@hisdoryan** The Field of the Cloth of Gold, or maybe a ball like the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball of 1897.

**@AthelstanKing** No contest: the battle of Brunanburh, on the actual battlefield.

**Janelle Gerke** The marriage of John of Gaunt to Katherine Swynford in Lincoln Cathedral. A medieval love story begging for a BBC drama series!

**@KateWilliamsme** The trial of Mary, Queen of Scots.

**@stephenfinch** The first Ashes cricket Test match.

**@SPloeg** The Glorious Revolution and all its intertwined political threads.

**Victoria Lynn Lyttle** The moment when Elizabeth I found out that Cecil had already had Mary, Queen of Scots executed.

**@Geiser\_Rules** When George III read his copy of the Declaration of Independence, followed by when he was informed Britain had lost.

**@LordMayoCVHS** I would love to see the awkwardness of Henry VIII's wedding with Anne of Cleves.

**@dwbell19** I'd like to see a re-creation of the lead-up to the Suez crisis. An event that singularly transformed both our role in and outlook on the postwar world.

**@bruce956** The Original Dixieland Jazz Band's first recording session. Or Buddy Bolden's - if there was such a thing.

**@gbw1969** George IV's coronation, with his wife battering at the doors to get in.

**@OU\_Williams 1851** Great Exhibition. With CGI if necessary.

**@victorianclare** WT Stead's 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' investigation and trial.



An 11th-century depiction of the Anglo-Saxon priest Wulfstan, who feared that Viking raids on England signalled the end of the world. Our background image shows a dragon on a Viking-era tombstone





COVER STORY

# A wolf's-eye view of the Viking apocalypse

England at the end of the first millennium was on its knees, plagued by Norse raiders.

**Laura Ashe** tells the story of this turbulent era through the voice of an Anglo-Saxon bishop who would help rebuild his nation

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**A**t the end of the first millennium, England was under attack. For a decade or more, Viking raiders had been landing at will on the coast or sailing their longships upriver.

The men from the north plundered settlements and villages. They took all goods of value, seized women and children to be sold as slaves, and killed those who fought against them.

We get a glimpse of what it was like to face the Vikings in the 325 surviving lines of the Old English poem *The Battle of Maldon*. It recounts how, in 991, Ealdorman Byrhtnoth and his men met a Viking army on the Essex coast. The two forces stood at stalemate on the shore, divided by a narrow causeway, until Byrhtnoth invited his enemies to advance onto firmer ground, where they fought, and he was killed.

The unnamed poet tells us that Byrhtnoth's men, loyal beyond death, stayed to fight to the end after their lord had fallen, declaring

their determination never to falter: "Mind must be the harder, heart the braver, spirit the greater, as our strength diminishes."

The poet suggests that Byrhtnoth allowed his pride, his *ofermod*, to lead him into a desperate conflict, but in reality he had little choice but to fight. Even successful attempts at defence were only temporary because the Vikings simply returned to their ships, regrouped and made landfall elsewhere.

There was, of course, nothing new in this. Norse raiders had plagued England's Anglo-Saxon kingdoms for two centuries, and had continued to do so after King Æthelstan united those kingdoms into an English nation in the early 10th century. Yet rarely had the Viking raids been the cause of such chaos, discord and destruction as in the years that brought the first millennium to a close.

As the relentless years of conflict wore on, the raids only became more frequent and more intense. The North Sea was a zone of warring Scandinavian kingdoms, in which any man defeated or expelled from his own country could seek allies, wealth and spoils by

raiding elsewhere, building his power for a return assault. What hope was there of a conclusion to the killing?

## Beset by horrors

A man named Wulfstan was appointed bishop of London in 996. He must have been a monk before his election, but we know nothing of his birth or early life. What we have from his time in London and later, however, is far more valuable than any biography: an outpouring of his words, his vividly expressed thoughts on the horrors that beset the English. In the early 11th century, as priest, writer and statesman, Wulfstan would be central to reestablishing order in the kingdom, serving English kings and Danish conquerors in turn. But as the year 1000 approached, he wrote, this chaos might even signal the end of the world:

"Now must it necessarily become very much worse, because it is nearing very close to his time, just as it is written and was long ago prophesied: 'After a thousand years Satan will be unbound.' A thousand years and even





more have now passed since Christ was among men in human form, and now Satan's bonds have become very loose, and Antichrist's time is very near, and so the world weakens the longer it goes on."

In this reading, England wasn't just a Christian country beset by pagan invaders and suffering a series of crushing defeats. Its people were living through the approach of judgment day. And with the apocalypse nearing, it wasn't enough for Wulfstan to be merely a prophet of doom. He called himself *Lupus*, the Wolf, and he launched savage verbal attacks on the sins of the people, certain that their travails were a punishment from God.

The Wolf was not alone in seeking God's aid and trying to win his forgiveness. The failure of English armies, even when they as Christians fought to defend their homeland against pagan enemies, seemed to suggest that God's wrath was turned against all violence and sin. Men who fell in battle were not guaranteed salvation – not for another century would warriors be promised God's favour in their crusades in the holy land.

In England at the turn of the millennium, the only way to please God was to achieve peace and repent of all sins. In the aftermath of the battle of Maldon, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that the Vikings accepted 10,000 pounds from Anglo-Saxon king Æthelred – known as *unræd*, 'ill-advised', although he's subsequently been dubbed 'the unready' – to cease their attacks. But if truce was made with one group of raiders, there were always more to replace them.

### Apocalypse averted

In 993, the Vikings defeated a large English army and, in 994, Æthelred made another treaty with the Viking leaders, paying them the vast fortune of 22,000 pounds in gold and silver. With this treaty, though, came a breakthrough: Olaf Tryggvason was baptised as a Christian, with King Æthelred standing as his sponsor. Olaf returned to Norway, where he was crowned in 995. He then embarked on the conversion of his people and never again attacked England. It seemed the answer to England's woes might lie with the faith. If the Vikings could be persuaded to accept baptism and make peace with their fellow Christians, perhaps the apocalypse could be averted.

But the 'ill-advised' king tried other strategies too. Alongside his Christian diplomacy and political bribery, Æthelred also paid Viking warriors to join his own army as mercenaries, defending England against their compatriots. It is difficult to assess how effective these forces might have been, but mercenaries among civilian



**Hapless leader**  
Æthelred the 'unready' or 'ill-advised'. This Anglo-Saxon king's attempt to repel the Vikings – from butchering them to buying them off – ultimately failed

## Wulfstan drafted sermons and homilies that thundered out the need for repentance from sin

populations have caused havoc and dissatisfaction in all places and times.

In 1002, Æthelred attempted another, more violent, tactic: he ordered the killing "of all the Danish men who were in England". This became known as the St Brice's Day Massacre, carried out on 13 November. We cannot now know how terrible an exercise this was intended to be, nor how many people were slaughtered – whether this was the suppression of a few bands of Viking mercenaries, or a widespread, royally sanctioned attack on a people who had long made up a great part of England's population.

One chilling piece of evidence for the killings on St Brice's Day comes from Oxford. Æthelred issued a charter two years later in 1004, describing his restoration of St Frideswide's Church. When he had ordered the killing of all Danes, he stated, some of them had fled for sanctuary into the Oxford

## Time of the Wolf

### c950-90

Probably born around the middle of the 10th century, Wulfstan becomes a monk at a time when the Benedictine reform movement is **strengthening the power of the church**.

### 990s

Wulfstan gains a reputation as an eloquent writer and preacher. While Viking raids grow in intensity, he **composes apocalyptic sermons** about the coming of the Antichrist.

### 996

Wulfstan **becomes bishop of London**, named in his correspondence as *Lupus episcopus*: 'the Wolf bishop'.

### 1002

He is **raised to the bishopric of Worcester and archbishopric of York**, held in plurality – the north is an unstable, borderland region, and it is usual to combine York with a see in the south.

### 1008

By 1008 he is **drafting lawcodes and public legislation for King Æthelred**, including the famous penitential code of 1009, commanding all the English to three days' penance to earn God's forgiveness and his aid against the Danes.

### 1009-16

Wulfstan **writes and redrafts the *Sermon of the Wolf to the English*** over the years of Danish invasion and conquest, preaching and circulating it.

### 1016-18

He **performs a diplomatic role** after Cnut's conquest in 1016. At the Council of Oxford in 1018, he is involved in making public peace between Danes and English.

### 1018

Wulfstan dedicates a church to the souls of the slain on the site of **Cnut's decisive victory at Assandun** (either Ashdon or Ashingdon) in Essex.

### 1020-21

Wulfstan **draws up King Cnut's great new lawcode** for the English.

### 1023

**Wulfstan dies at York**, and is buried at Ely in Cambridgeshire.





church, and when their pursuers could not reach them they set the whole church on fire. In 2008, an archaeological excavation in St John's College found a pit containing the heaped-up skeletons of about 36 young men, most of them younger than 25, all thought to be the victims of this crime. With striking complacency, at the end of his charter Æthelred piously noted that "with God's aid" he had rebuilt the church.

## Ever-greater destruction

Over these years, Wulfstan's influence continued to grow. In 1002, he was promoted to become bishop of Worcester and archbishop of York, holding both sees (ecclesiastical seats of authority) at once. At a stroke, he became King Æthelred's right-hand man in the north, where the Danes had long held greatest influence, while the wealthy bishopric of Worcester made him a power in England's heartland.

A famine across northern Europe in 1005 offered a respite from attacks, but it was only temporary. In the years from 1006 to 1012, England suffered two of the most devastating of all Viking raids, with invasion and destruction sweeping across ever-greater regions of the country. It was during these years that Archbishop Wulfstan emerged as the king's leading statesman, and his writings show him grappling with the crisis at the highest level.

The Wolf wrote lawcodes and legislation for Æthelred and his people, seeking to shore up the English state in its governance and justice. He drafted sermons and homilies that thundered out the need for repentance from sin. He wrote works of political theory about how the state should function and the role of each member of society in its flourishing. In 1009, "when the great army came to the country", Wulfstan composed a lawcode in

**Clash of the heirs**  
Cnut, right, defeats Æthelred's son Edmund Ironside at the battle of Assandun. Cnut succeeded to the kingdom – whereupon he sought Wulfstan's advice on how to rule

With great foresight  
and political skill,  
Wulfstan seized the  
chance to remake  
the nation under his  
new Danish king

Æthelred's name ordering all the people to perform public penance, in the hope of winning God's forgiveness: "We all need earnestly to strive that we might gain God's mercy and compassion, and that with his help we might resist our enemies. Now it is our will that all the people perform a general penance for three days on bread and herbs and water... and cry out urgently to Christ from their innermost heart."

For Wulfstan, history could only be explained by God's will – and God's determination to punish sinners, even to the destruction of a nation. Yet something important had changed with the passing of the millennium. The end of the world, it seemed, might not after all be at hand. The Danes who now brought armies into England were Christians themselves – and if not all their warriors practised the faith, certainly their rulers and leaders did. They could no longer be regarded

as Satan's ministers, or signs of his power in the world but – as his most famous work, the *Sermon of the Wolf to the English* (written c1009), details – God's instrument of punishment for English sin.

"Beloved men, know the truth," he began. "This world is in haste, and approaches its end. And so it is the worse in this world the longer it goes on, and because of the people's sins it must needs worsen from day to day, until the coming of Antichrist."

These great sins have overrun the country, Wulfstan said, and so the Danish raiders and invaders will never be defeated: "The English are now long victory-less, terribly demoralised through God's anger."

Wulfstan reminded the English people of their own past as invaders and conquerors who had taken the land from the British: "There was a historian in the Britons' time named Gildas. He wrote about their misdeeds, of how through their sins they angered God so excessively that at last he allowed the English army to conquer their land and to destroy British strength entirely." But now, Wulfstan declared, we know of worse sins among the English than ever the British committed, and so the Danes are sent to scourge us.

## The people's terror

Around the time that Wulfstan wrote the *Sermon of the Wolf to the English*, one of the most notorious events of the struggle took place: the violent death of an archbishop. In September 1011, a Danish army captured Canterbury, and took the archbishop Ælfheah hostage. They demanded a vast sum for the city's freedom and then further loot for the archbishop's release, but Ælfheah is said to have refused to be ransomed. On 19 April 1012 he was killed, apparently beaten to death during a drunken feast. Now Wulfstan,









**A prisoner of his past**

Aleksander Kulisiewicz was haunted by his experiences of Sachsenhausen. "I survived the Nazi period, but I never left the concentration camp," he later said



# SONGS OF THE DAMNED

Aleksander Kulisiewicz survived five years in a Nazi concentration camp, where he committed the music and lyrics of his fellow inmates to memory.

As **Mark Burman** recounts, it was an act of defiance that allows us to glimpse a manmade hell

Accompanies the BBC World Service documentary *Songs from the Depths of Hell*, produced by Mark Burman



Aleksander Kulisiewicz lay in a Polish infirmary seemingly babbling. The doctor assumed he was raving. Kulisiewicz thought he was dying. He had survived five years of incarceration in Sachsenhausen concentration camp and the subsequent death march ordered by the SS as the Soviets closed in, in April 1945. But the nurse attending Kulisiewicz realised he was urging her to transcribe what he was feverishly reciting. She began copying down what would become hundreds of pages of lyrics. Songs of the damned and the dead. Songs of utter darkness or wicked portraits of camp life. Songs of longing for home or loved ones. Among them 54 of his own compositions.

Recovered, Kulisiewicz would spend the rest of his life performing and collecting songs and stories of the survivors of the Nazi concentration camp system, which had imprisoned and murdered millions. It's a body of work that represents the largest single source of music composed in the concentration camps. He died in 1982 before completing a 3,000-page musical survey that had increasingly absorbed his life to the detriment of his family and marriage.

There was precious little interest in all of this in his native Poland, which had been largely stripped of its Jewish population and was in thrall to manipulative communist narratives about the Holocaust. Kulisiewicz's vast collection of tapes and papers began gathering dust – effectively in storage at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, until in 1993 it was brought to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. Even now its contents are still being catalogued. A CD that emerged, *Ballads and Broad-sides*, joins a collection of Kulisiewicz recordings that remain profoundly compelling musical documents.

The songs he left us have titles such as 'The Burnt Mother', 'The Corpse Carrier's Tango' and, detailing SS repressions against homosexuals imprisoned in Sachsenhausen, 'Dicke Luft' ('Thick Air'). The lyrics are in German, Polish, Czech, Ukrainian and Yiddish. What you hear are trancelike performances featuring a strummed guitar, and a voice bitingly direct and unsettling. Conveying bitterness and sorrow, wreathed in darkness, Kulisiewicz was a living tape recorder of his days in Sachsenhausen.

Playwright and translator Peter Wortsman cut an album with Kulisiewicz in the late 1970s: *Songs from the Depths of Hell*. Even now, the



## Holocaust survivor

recording experience marks him. “My mind went blank; I was horrified and heartened at the same time,” Wortsmann recalls. “A song like ‘Lullaby for Little Son in the Crematorium’ – do you have a right to listen to it, or shut your ears? He was Orpheus in hell, singing songs to try to raise the dead.”

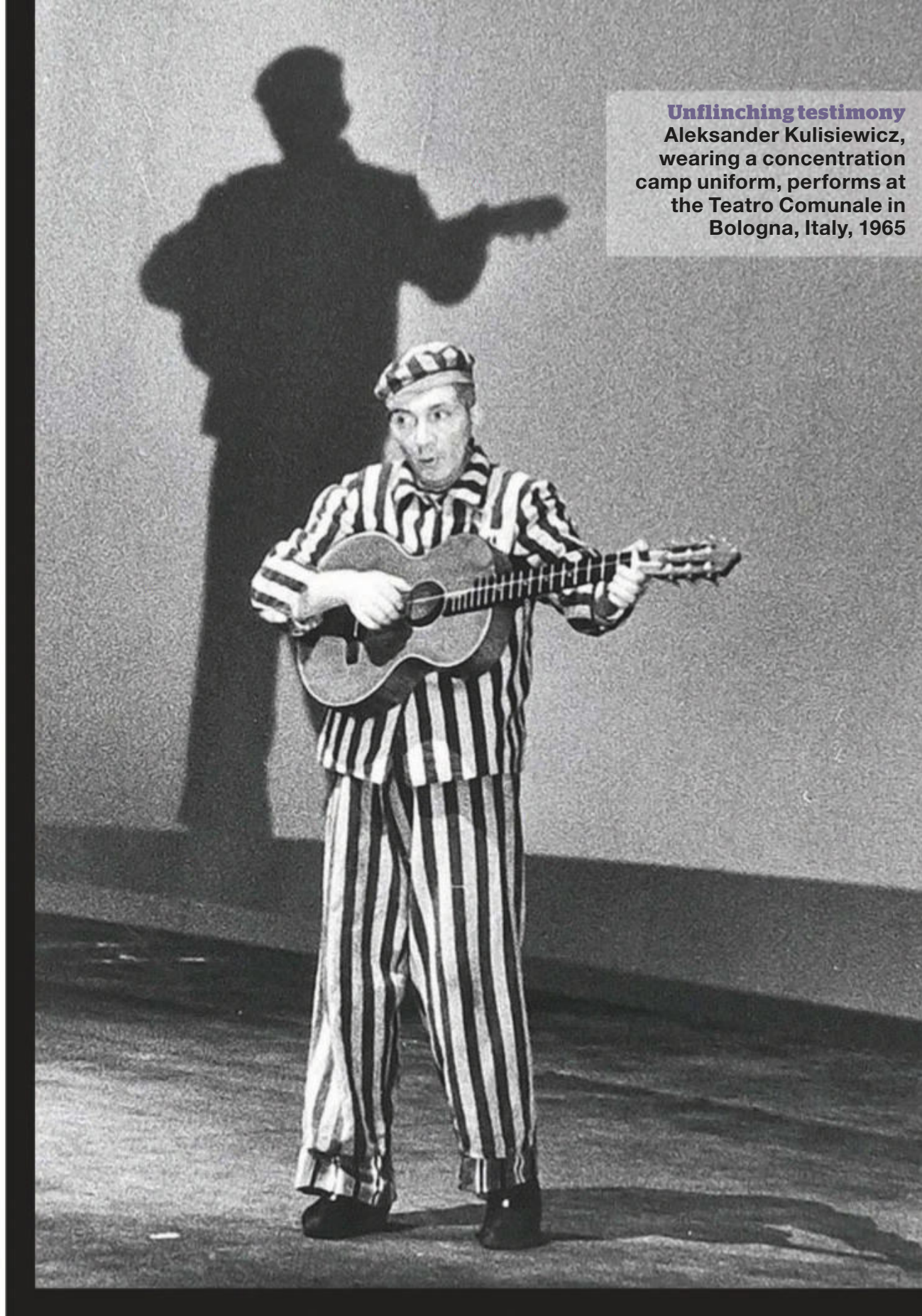
### Without hope of release

Aleksander Tytus Kulisiewicz was 22 when Sachsenhausen’s gates, bearing the mocking legend *Arbeit Macht Frei* (‘work sets you free’) closed behind him on 30 May 1940. In prewar Poland, he had been a wanderer, a misfit and a hellraiser, to the frustration of his father. He had performed ‘artistic whistling’ on stage in Czechoslovakia and Austria, sang in Krakow’s febrile cabaret scene, pursued a lover (a 17-year-old circus horseback rider) and worked under canvas as a clown’s assistant. “I would lie down on the sawdust, like a corpse, while the boss would beat me on the head with an inflated rubber club. I’d then get up whistling, out of the blue,” he recalled.

He was arrested over an anti-fascist essay, ‘Homegrown Hitlerisms’, which proclaimed: “Enough Hitler, Heil Butter.” Beaten and jailed, first in his hometown of Cieszyn, Polish Silesia, he was then sent up the system to Berlin before joining thousands of Polish prisoners entering the ever-expanding world of the conquered at Sachsenhausen, just 20 miles from Hitler’s capital. Alongside him were the professors and lecturers of Krakow’s Jagiellonian University – their arrests part of Nazi plans to destroy Poland’s intelligentsia.

Behind the wire, Kulisiewicz’s experience was a grotesque parody of his time in the circus. “The camp was some sort of dark, perverted circus of sadists and miscreants,” he later said. “But here they didn’t hit you with inflated rubber clubs. Fellow prisoners looked like striped clowns, on whom an entire menagerie was unleashed. There was no sawdust, only cold dirt. No one had to pretend to be dead.”

Kulisiewicz was imprisoned, like so many, under *Schutzhaft* (‘protective custody’). This meant arrest without judicial review. Entering Sachsenhausen early in the war, though, was fortunate in a way. Kulisiewicz formed bonds with prisoners at the top of the camp hierarchy, such as the German ‘politicals’, entrusted by the SS with making lists of inmates for transportation. Valued for his memory skills, Kulisiewicz was likely shielded by them and was never transferred. He was able to speak several languages, including fluent German – essential for responding to commands. But Sachsenhausen was still a brutal, murderous place: up to 50,000 would die there before the war’s end. His survival was remarkable.



**Unflinching testimony**  
Aleksander Kulisiewicz, wearing a concentration camp uniform, performs at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna, Italy, 1965

Outside the wire and guard towers of this ‘model camp’ stood the administrative headquarters of Himmler’s SS. This was a place to breed a new cadre of camp administrators, such as Rudolf Höss, who would soon preside over Auschwitz. Inside was an increasing babble of languages. Silence reigned only during the humiliating roll call.

Music had a dual life there. The SS would command the more musical prisoners to perform *Volkslieder* (folk songs) for them, or compel performances to accompany floggings and other punishments.

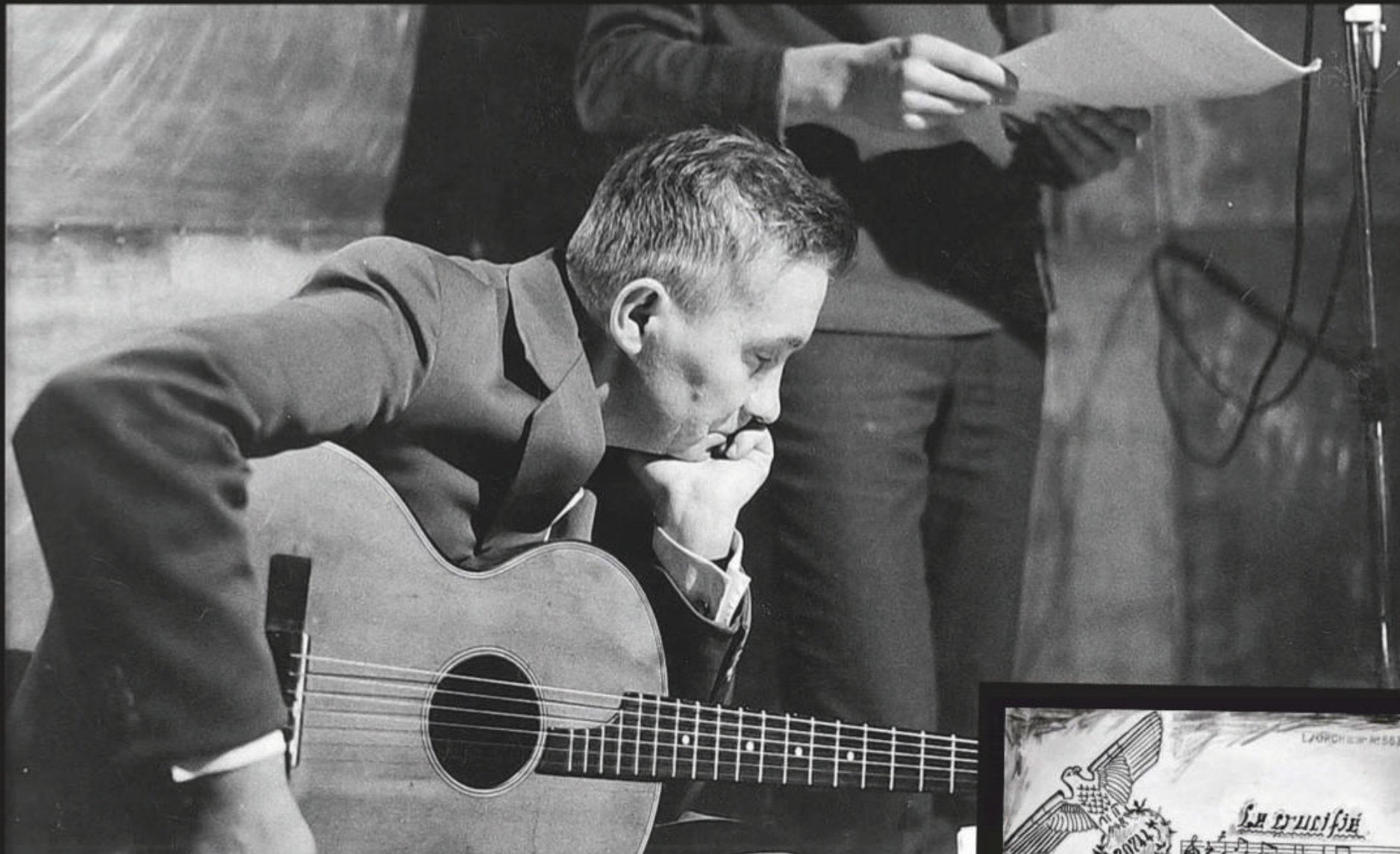
Occasionally, concerts of operettas and light works took place for favoured prisoner communities. But when the SS retired from the camp grounds at nightfall, different melodies emerged. German political prisoners sang their communal songs of solidarity. Czech students conducted rehearsals among the stacked corpses and echoing tiles of the mortuary. The Poles, part of a nation

marked for starvation and annihilation by the Nazis, sang songs frequently full of bitterness and torment.

Kulisiewicz, with his facility for languages, could move among these different groups, who welcomed not only his musical talents but also his extraordinary memory. A freak electrocution during childhood had given him speech problems until he was taught mnemonic techniques to recover language. Nothing was forgotten.

But it was Kulisiewicz’s encounter with the socialist choir leader Rosebery d’Arguto and his clandestine chorus of Jewish prisoners that forever defined his calling. By late 1942, d’Arguto and his choir knew they were bound for destruction and, in utmost secrecy, were intensely rehearsing the bitter, tragic comic *Jüdischer Todessang* (‘Jewish Death Song’), based on the Yiddish folk melody *Tsen Brider* (‘Ten Brothers’), but with lyrics changed to reflect the fate of the Jews heading for the gas



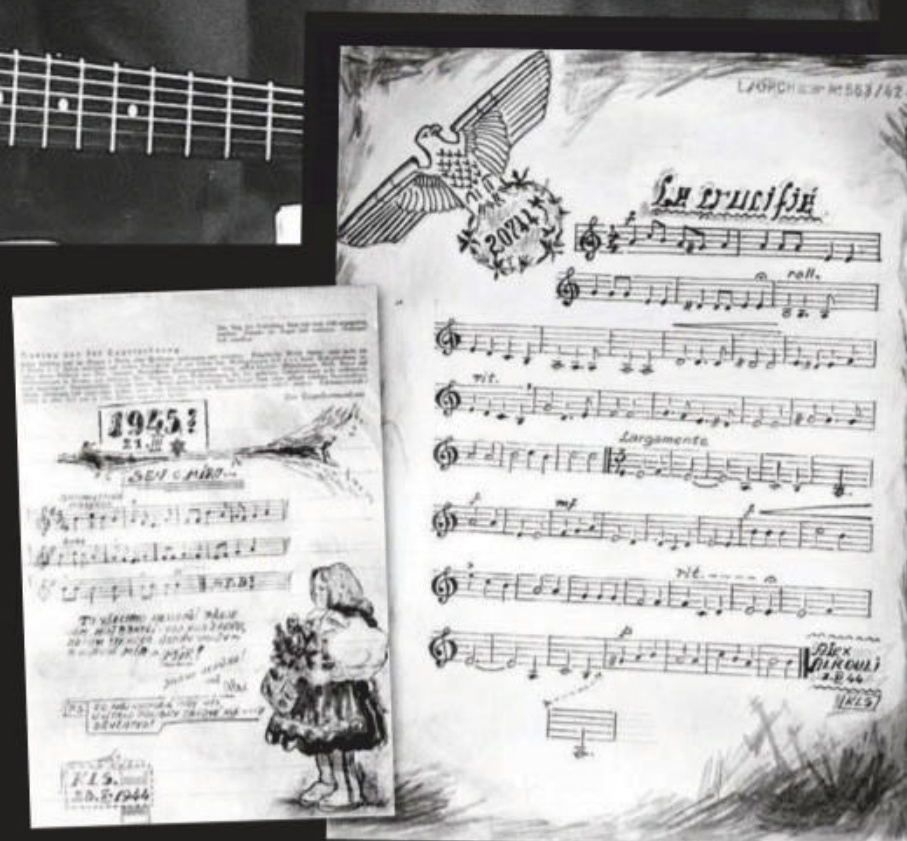


## Conveying bitterness and sorrow, wreathed in darkness, Kulisiewicz was **a living tape recorder of his days in Sachsenhausen**

### Mournful music man

ABOVE: Aleksander Kulisiewicz performed his songs with the same guitar he had used at Sachsenhausen

RIGHT: Two compositions from Kulisiewicz's time in Sachsenhausen: 'Dream About Peace' (left), which he wrote for a group of Czech prisoners in 1944, and 'The Crucified'



chambers. In a narrative that he endlessly repeated, d'Arguto implored Kulisiewicz to remember the song.

"Aleks, you are young. You speak German, you seem to have good relations with people here," d'Arguto said. "We are sure you will survive and will leave this camp. We will be killed, Jews will not survive. Go into the world and sing our songs. Tell people about this horror and murder and this will be your mission. If you do it, God will protect you here and after the war."

### Chosen and damned

D'Arguto and his choir were executed, but Kulisiewicz had his mission, which he never relinquished: "Other prisoners came to me – Czechs, Poles, Germans. 'Aleks, have you got some room in your archive?' I would close my eyes and say, 'Recite...'" Kulisiewicz became what he called a "poetic octopus" of hate, justice and longing. He could poke fun

at the Nazis, depict the bleakest of conditions and be a repository for the cramped humanity of Sachsenhausen.

For 20 years after liberation, Kulisiewicz had no audience beyond other camp-survivor organisations across Poland, which he would encounter in his work as a travelling salesman. But in 1965 he stepped onto the stage at Bologna's Music of the Resistance festival and found a new outlet for his musical testimony. A young generation was beginning to tear away at the stifling silence of postwar Europe and its fascist past. West German youth, in particular, were questioning the convenient narratives of their parents and here was Kulisiewicz, a living witness to the world of camps such as Sachsenhausen that had immediately abutted ordinary, 'good' German homes. He would perform continuously for the next 16 years while obsessively working on his archive.

There were albums, television and radio

appearances and concerts. He clothed his diminutive form in the stripes of his KZ (concentration camp) uniform. He would strum the guitar he took from Sachsenhausen and always he would perform the 'Jewish Death Song' of d'Arguto's choir, keeping his promise to honour their memory and play the music of death and life. He knew he was chosen and damned. **H**

Mark Burman is a BBC radio documentaries producer

### DISCOVER MORE

#### RADIO

► **Songs from the Depths of Hell**, a documentary about Aleksander Kulisiewicz's music presented by Alan Dein and produced by Mark Burman, will air on BBC World Service in late January

#### WEBSITE

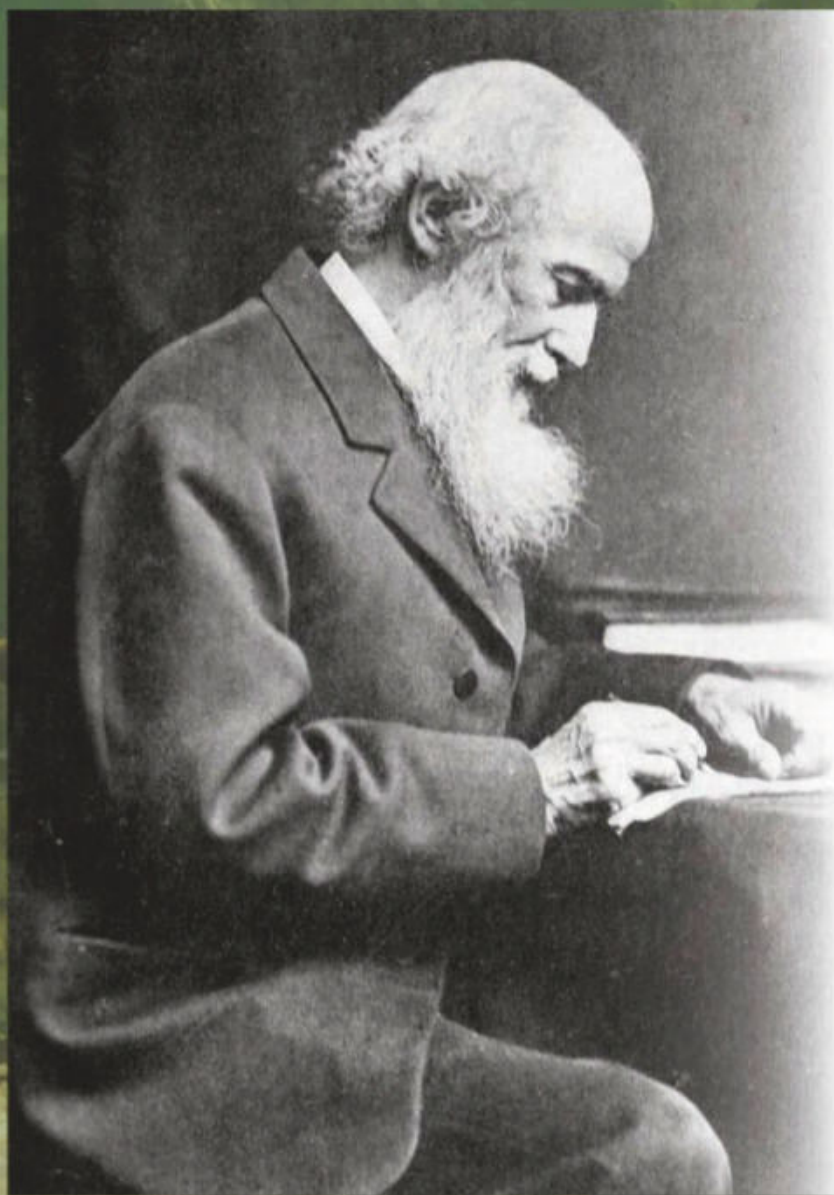
► To listen to excerpts of Kulisiewicz's music, search on [ushmm.org](http://ushmm.org)





# An American's verdict on *Victorian Britain*

In 1844, the Connecticut businessman Elizur Wright penned a series of letters describing a six-month visit he made to Britain. The result, writes **Richard Sugg**, is a remarkable, unvarnished outsider's account of the world's first industrial nation in all its grime and glory



**E**lizur Wright is one of the most remarkable Americans of whom you have probably never heard. Born into a fiercely pious family in Connecticut in 1804, Wright (pictured left) came close to studying for the priesthood, yet spent his final years as an atheist, campaigning against his country's puritanical obscenity laws. In between, he taught mathematics, practised engineering, risked his personal safety fighting for the abolition of slavery, reformed American life insurance and developed a vigorous interest in the social and political problems afflicting Great Britain.

That latter passion was sharpened by a trip Wright made to Britain in 1844. This was nominally a personal business venture, designed to boost his family fortunes. But Wright also

used the trip to engage in walks, tours and political campaigns in locations as varied as London, Essex, Suffolk, Yorkshire, Newcastle and Scotland. As such, the trip offered him an immersive experience of Britain in the early years of Queen Victoria's reign.

Wright was a man with a hungry eye for all the details of social life, landscape, architecture and industry, and when that eye alighted on a detail that commanded his attention – the beauty of a Lake District mountain, the privilege of Etonian aristocrats, the desperation of London's poor – he felt moved to record what he saw.

These observations would burst forth, in a wealth of vibrant colour, from a series of letters he wrote between April and September 1844 chronicling his experiences. As the following examples prove, his correspondence painted a portrait of Britain that was scathing, admiring, appalled, awestruck – and never short of fascinating.





The unemployed scramble for soup tickets in an engraving from *The Illustrated London News*. Elizur Wright observed the plight of the poor with a horrified fascination

## A buried-alive population

Wright was appalled by the poverty he witnessed in Britain's great cities

Of all the sentiments that Wright betrayed in his letters, perhaps none are more powerful than the horror he expressed on witnessing Britain's poor. Watching people take supper and beer outside the London alehouses, he beheld "a sort of piggish intoxication... in some" and "a marvellous degree of stupidity in all. Their faces seemed coarsely cut gravestones of mind."

Walking along Oxford Street late one night, Wright was implored by a shabby little girl, who told of her mother lying hungry at home

with typhus fever. Following her to Tottenham Court Road, he watched her "nimble tripping on her devious way... through narrow, sepulchral archways, swarming with a sort of buried-alive population", until she "at last went up a filthy alley, about three feet wide, and entered at the third door". Shrewdly noticing potatoes in the room, Wright lectured the supposedly bedridden woman for training her child to lie, but presently went off with the girl to buy them bread.

Meanwhile, having heard the British poor

described as 'the great unwashed', Wright was astonished, just after 5am one Sunday morning, to find perhaps 3,000 men and boys bathing in the Serpentine in Hyde Park. "Such a scene!... The people are constantly coming and going, and by 8 o'clock I have no doubt 10,000 had come and gone away refreshed." After 8am the bathers might be ordered out of the water by the police, lest their nakedness or poverty offend the gentry and nobility, strolling or riding in carriages along the bank.





A pitiful sight? Members of London's elite mount their carriage in a 19th-century lithograph

## High-born "locusts"

Wright's brushes with the aristocracy persuaded him that the rich were a drain on the nation

Wright's trip to Britain took him into the orbit not just of the nation's 'great unwashed' but also some of the most powerful figures in the empire – and the American was no less appalled by what he witnessed. Describing a ball given by the Duke of Wellington, Wright pictured "900 of the highest nobility" gathering to "look at each other's diamonds, dance the polka" and "sip headaches or guzzle the gout, in the shape of champagne". He concluded that "they are truly to be pitied".

At Eton College, the American was impressed by "the grand aristocratic nursery of the nation", with "buildings of great... magnificence, and pleasure grounds... of indescribable beauty". And he was still more struck by the strange three-yearly custom in which royalty and nobility assembled one morning, to be accosted by Etonians, "dressed in silk hose and doublets, with drawn swords, demanding in the style of highwaymen, 'Salt! Salt!'". 'Salt' was in fact money, and the total takings of £1,300 were "all given to the captain or head boy", half of which "was invested for his support through the university".

Meeting the elderly William Wordsworth at Rydal Mount in the Lakes, Wright argued firmly against the poet's belief that America, like Britain, should have "a class of gentlemen... born to such large property that they could devote themselves entirely to literary pursuits". "The longer I stayed in England," he wrote, "the more this class of independent, hereditary gentlemen seemed to me like a perpetual devouring curse of locusts."



## Cathedrals of progress

Britain's industrial transformation had propelled it a thousand years into the future

Wright was stunned by the sheer scale and might of London, the world's greatest capital. "This is a country of the most astonishing wealth and strength," he wrote. "Going from Boston to London is like taking a trip of a thousand years by railroad down the valley of time. London is, perhaps, what Boston will be just a thousand years hence – that is, in AD 2844 – worth seeing, is it not?" Touring the Thames docks, he marvelled at a tobacco warehouse of four or five acres, and a cellar boasting 37,000 hogsheads of rum.

Wright harboured a lifelong hatred of alcohol, but grudging admiration crept through when he asked: "What is that dark murky building, towering far above the sea of brick and mortar,

with chimneys like church steeples?" For this was one of many of "the cathedral breweries, consecrated to the gospel of brutality".

Passing by Newgate prison, Wright was confronted by London's older and official cathedral, St Paul's. "Turning to the right, the mighty work of Sir Christopher Wren bursts upon us through a narrow opening in the swamp of old sooty edifices." Walking on to ascend the monument to the Great Fire of London, he gazed down at the church of St Dunstan in the East. "What airy festoonery of cut stone. A perfect frolic of art! The scene is quite indescribable. What things under this sea of red tiles now beneath your feet. Here is the world's throat – the jugular of its wealth."



A 19th-century depiction of the Thames toward St Paul's Cathedral which, Wright wrote, burst upon him "through a narrow opening in the swamp of old sooty edifices"



## London's dystopia

Wright described a metropolis populated by grave robbers and skewered entrails

When in London, Wright was confronted with grim visions of death, both human and animal. The overcrowded burial plots of the capital's churches were not only disturbed regularly for fresh interments, but were also plundered for valuables, or for anatomical research.

Among other secrets of the necropolis, Wright heard of a gravedigger working seven or eight feet below the surface, when "suddenly the headless corpse of a woman fell upon him, its clammy arms throwing themselves about his neck". A former sexton "had disinterred this woman, stolen her coffin and her head and sold them... then covered up the trunk in its shroud at a slight depth".

And then there was the appetite of the living for meat. Estimating that, at "Smithfield on Monday morning" there were "not less than three acres of solid, compact sheep", Wright added that, "by Tuesday morning they will be hanging in thousands of butchers' shops... skinned nicely all except their heads, which are left on with their eyes open and the blood trickling from their noses".

Come the following Monday morning, "London has made an end of all this – has swallowed its mutton chops and licked its wolf chops, and is ready for another three acres of sheep". Down at the bottom of the meat trade, Wright saw men hawking skewered entrails to the cry of "C-a-t's meat!". "A very poor woman lodged in a garret or cellar will cheerfully spend a farthing or halfpenny a day on her beloved cat."

## The clamour for reform

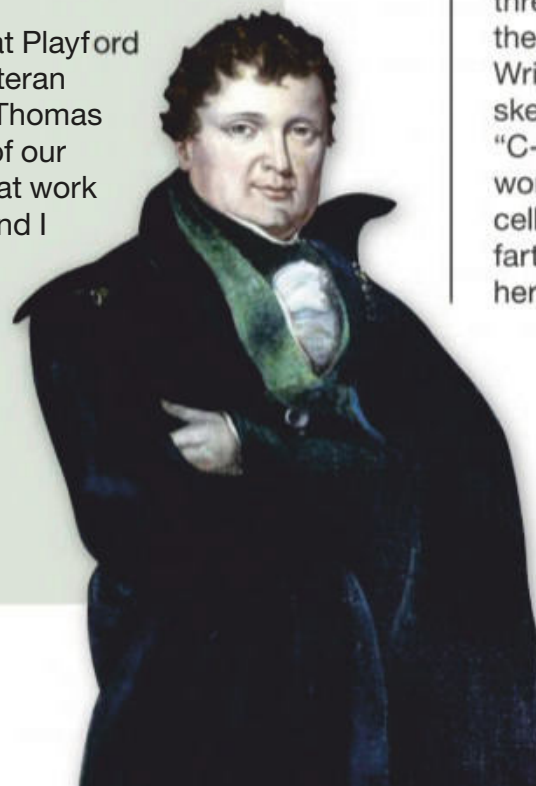
To the American observer, Britain was a nation in which political justice was denied to all but the monied few

Wright crossed the Atlantic at a turbulent moment in British politics. In February 1844 Daniel O'Connell (pictured right), the great champion of Irish Catholic emancipation, had been convicted on a trumped-up charge of conspiracy, but was yet to be sentenced. In mid-March, at a packed and stifling meeting in St Mary's Hall, Coventry, Wright's assertion that he had come 3,000 miles to see O'Connell caused a determined Irishman to force him through the crowd until the American was on the stage itself. "The convicted conspirator at length rose, a kind, genial looking, gigantic old man. Surely he was born to *agitate*. His smile is magically captivating, his derision annihilating, his frown terrific... I could not but love as well as admire the man."

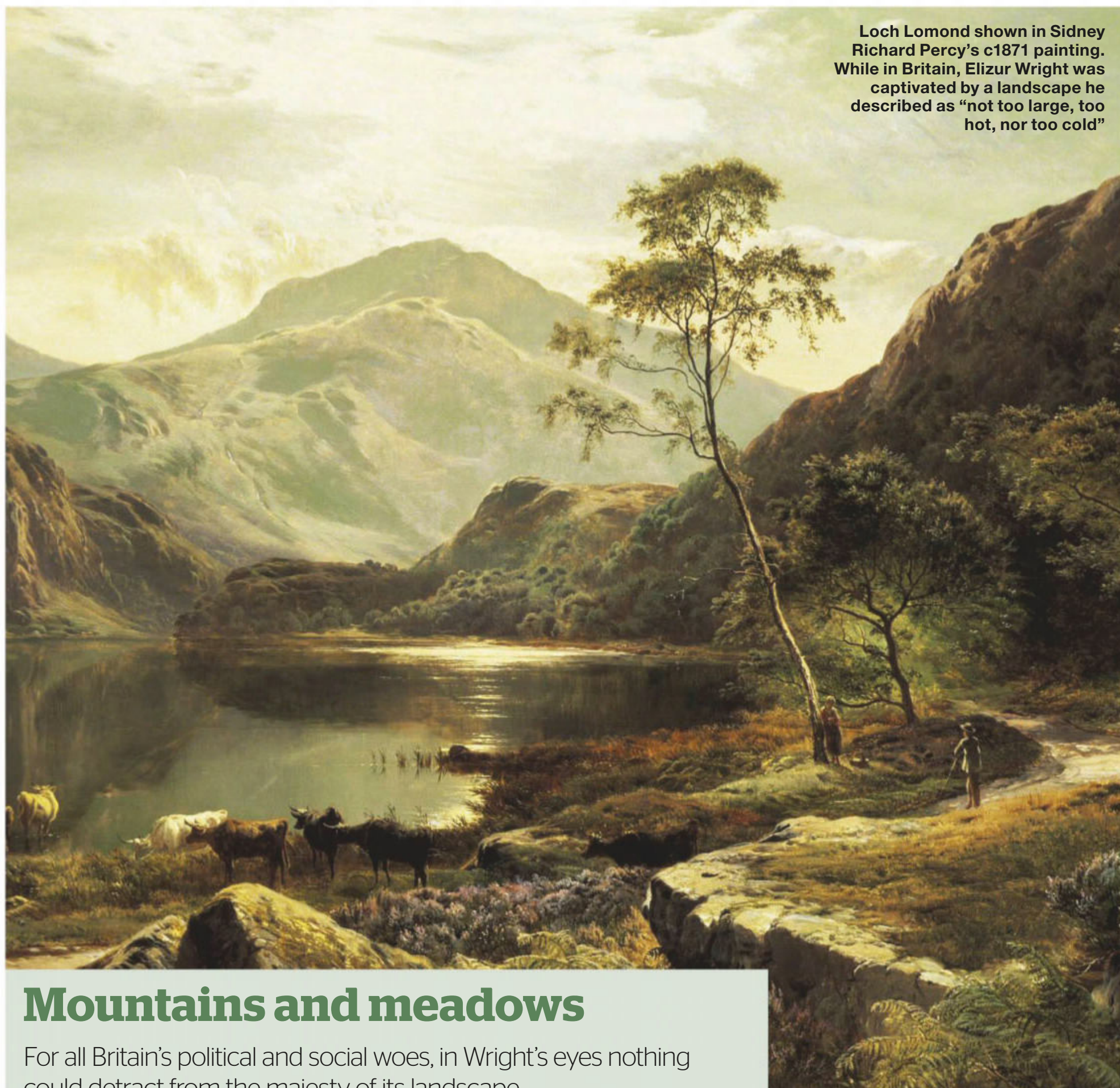
Throughout his stay, Wright denounced the injustice of the Corn Laws, which kept bread prices high, and the taxes on beer and tobacco, asserting that "England may

be said to live under a trinity of evil: kingcraft, beercraft, priestcraft". And it was abundantly clear to him that further electoral reform was needed. "The kingdom has 6 million of men over 21, and yet there are about 800,000 actual voters!"

In late June he stayed at Playford Hall in Suffolk with the veteran anti-slavery campaigner Thomas Clarkson, "the patriarch of our cause", a man who "was at work for the slave before you and I were born". Although physically infirm at 84, Clarkson's "mind is bright, and he maintains a lively interest in everything pertaining to slavery, and expressed himself with great energy and animation".







Loch Lomond shown in Sidney Richard Percy's c1871 painting. While in Britain, Elizur Wright was captivated by a landscape he described as "not too large, too hot, nor too cold"

## Mountains and meadows

For all Britain's political and social woes, in Wright's eyes nothing could detract from the majesty of its landscape

"I pronounce material England a paradise. It is not too large, too hot, nor too cold... It is full, naturally, of all conceivable beauties, of mountain and plain, land and water." At times Elizur Wright seems as intoxicated by the British landscape as he is appalled by British society and politics. "It must," he imagined, "have been inexpressibly beautiful when the druids lived under its primeval oaks."

"I have just returned," he wrote on 17 August, "from a tour of Derbyshire, the cliffs of Scarborough, the valley of the Tyne, Dumbarton Castle... the vale of Leven, Loch Lomond, Ben Lomond, the Cobbler, Edinburgh and Arthur's Seat." In the Lake District he beheld "a great flock of mountains

which appear to be frolicking for joy" with "white lines streaking down, like little currents of milk... torrents of water dashing down in a perfect foam, falling perhaps 2,000 feet". "To live where Wordsworth does at Rydal, is enough to make any man – even a Dutchman – a poet."

In his final letter, Wright exclaimed: "After seeing the golden harvests of the rich eastern counties and Yorkshire, the meadows of the Thames... the garden valley of the Tweed... the springs of Malvern; the valleys of the Severn and the Wye... surely I have a right to say: 'Avaunt, all geography; this island is the very spot where the human race ought to develop itself in all its power and glory.'" **H**

Richard Sugg is an author whose books include *A Century of Supernatural Stories* (2015), *Fairies: A Dangerous History* (Reaktion, 2018) and the upcoming *The Real Vampires* (Amberley, June 2019)

### DISCOVER MORE

#### WEBSITE

► You'll find more of **Elizur Wright's observations on Victorian Britain** on the *BBC History Magazine* website: [historyextra.com/victorian-britain](http://historyextra.com/victorian-britain)



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# THE WOMEN WHO WOULDN'T BE SILENCED

Tales of wives shaming errant husbands, brides forcing lovers to marry them and maidservants taking their rapists to court emerge from **Suzannah Lipscomb's** research into the female residents of Reformation France. So, she asks, does this mean that women in 16th-century Europe wielded more power than we previously thought?



A maid polishes a silver dish. Female domestic servants were highly vulnerable to sexual exploitation, but in Reformation France they found some ways to fight back







Protestants reconquer the French city of Nîmes in 1569. The moral tribunals that they established had the unintended consequence of empowering women

In December 1600, a French maidservant called Marguerite Brueysse claimed that her master, Anthoine Bonnet, had made her pregnant. Anthoine, who was probably in his fifties or sixties, was an influential man. When summoned to the consistory (a sort of Huguenot church court) in the city of Nîmes in Languedoc to answer the accusation, Anthoine denied everything and called Marguerite a whore. He also claimed that she was pregnant by cobbler Andre Fauchier, who lived nearby. Before leaving, Anthoine even displayed a declaration Marguerite had apparently made before a magistrate assigning paternity to Fauchier.

But that wasn't the end of the matter. The consistory wanted to know more, and asked Marguerite for her story. She initially said that Anthoine had "persuaded and induced her by words and promises" to have sex with him and promised her 50 écus (which he never gave her) if she would blame her pregnancy on Fauchier. The consistory asked her – as a test of truth – if she would repeat her accusations to her master. She said she would.

A week later, the two came face-to-face and, in deference to his status, the consistory allowed Anthoine to cross-examine

Marguerite. He told her to tell the truth "according to God and her conscience". She replied that, "according to God and her conscience, she had been known carnally" and made pregnant by him. He enquired where he had known her first and how he had persuaded her. She replied that it was "one day when she was taking excrement out to the ditch in Bonnet's garden" when he had ordered her into the stable and there "threw her on a pile of rye where he knew her by force, putting a handkerchief in her mouth to stop her from shouting".

In response, Anthoine disparaged Marguerite's sexual reputation and suggested

that her brother had made her accuse him. She denied having sex with anyone else or having been persuaded to act by her brother. When Anthoine started to question her for a second time about the circumstances in which he had propositioned her, she lost her composure, dropping angrily out of the official French into her mother-tongue, Occitan, to say: "As you wanted, in a ditch of dung, in Rodilhan, a year less a month ago."

Ten days later, the consistory met to deliberate on the matter. They summoned Anthoine and charged him to tell the truth. He swore that he was falsely accused – but the consistory didn't believe him. Their unanimous judgment was that Anthoine would be suspended from the Eucharist. He was livid, shouting at them "in all passion and anger... that they did him a great wrong to believe a whore rather than a good man".

**A married woman had no independent legal status; any woman's testimony was worth less than a man's**

## Impossible to prove

It's no surprise that Anthoine was angry. Most female domestic servants were in their teens or early twenties, and were especially vulnerable to sexual abuse by their male employers. Prosecution rates for rape were very low: women had to prove the impossible – active physical resistance throughout the



## It was assumed that, in most seductions, the woman was either the initiator or had yielded voluntarily

attack. Not only that but women were believed to be physically, morally, mentally and emotionally weaker than men, and especially more driven to lust and lechery. It was assumed that in most seductions, the woman was either the initiator or had yielded voluntarily.

Medical beliefs tipped the scales further in men's favour. It was thought that women needed to reach a sexual climax to conceive, so a pregnant woman claiming to be raped could not have been raped at all. Therefore, most rapists got off scot-free. What's more, a married woman had no legal status apart from her husband's; any woman's testimony was worth considerably less than a man's.

And yet, in the case of Anthoine Bonnet and Marguerite Brueysse, the Protestant church authorities believed a young, lowly servant-woman rather than an older man of influence. This is not what the consistory – the Protestant church's mechanism for imposing morality – had been set up to do. Although it was also the governing body and welfare centre of the local church, most of its time was given to moral supervision, interrogation and reprimand.

Throughout Protestant Languedoc, elders were appointed to oversee a district of a few streets and were charged to report back any moral failings. And the ministers, elders, deacons and scribes who made up the consistory in each Protestant town were nothing if not zealous. They investigated routine gossip, noted all indiscretions, and reported every impropriety. The aim was to create a community that was visibly distinguished by its holiness – holiness that would be achieved by eradicating superstition, magic, fortune-telling, games,

dancing (which was thought “dissolute and scandalous, tending to fornication”), fights, violence, insults and, above all, sexual sin.

As women were thought to be primarily responsible for sexual and other sins, controlling morals meant controlling women. The consistory was a fundamentally patriarchal institution, intended to uphold existing social hierarchies and reinforce the authority of husbands and fathers.

### Playing the system

But there were unintended consequences to this moral discipline. First of all, women appeared before the consistory frequently: in my research into the consistorial records of 10 towns and cities in Languedoc (a total of 25 volumes and more than 1,200 cases), I have found well over a thousand testimonies about women and, crucially, by women – most of whom left no other record to posterity.

And the consistorial system produced another – entirely ironic and accidental – result: it *empowered* Languedoc's female residents. Women quickly learned how to use the consistory to their advantage: they denounced those who abused them, they forced men to honour marriage promises, and they started rumours they knew would be followed up by the elders. In short, they used the church courts to obtain justice, to secure marriage and to ensure provision for their children. And this empowerment is reflected in the consistorial registers, which suggest that women could be independent, self-determining and vocal – even in an age when they had limited legal rights, were barred from public office and higher education, and played no formal role in the church law or government.

This is no heroic tale. Women's suits were

## How women fought back

### 1 They weren't afraid to pass judgment

In 1588, a group of women led by the wife of Guillaume des Arènes and her neighbour Marguerite gathered outside the house of Vidal Raymond, a maker of pack-saddles living in Nîmes. These women were his neighbours. They beat their fists on the door and cried out to Raymond to let them in, saying that they knew he kept a woman inside. Raymond refused, so the women forced an entry and found a woman trying to hide herself beneath a pile of straw. They called her a ‘whore’ and chased her out of town. The women then went on to report the matter to a church elder.

### 2 They could force men to marry them

In 1598, Catherine Lamberte, a Catholic, told the Montauban consistory that she and a Protestant cordswain called Jehan Picard had made promises to marry, and that she had given him 100 livres towards her dowry. Jehan had since contracted marriage with another woman, and denied receipt of the dowry, but did admit that they had drawn up a contract. He said that, as Catherine had refused to convert to Protestantism, the contract was null.

Catherine next appeared brandishing the contract of marriage, and a receipt for 60 livres of the dowry. It predated Jehan's other marriage contract, so the consistory deemed that the marriage to Catherine should go ahead.

### 3 They humiliated philandering husbands

In Montauban in 1595, Anne de Valaty twice discovered her husband, Pierre Cordiny, trying to have sex with their maid. The first time she cried out to her neighbours on the street that she had found her husband lying with the maid on a sack, and wailed: “I would never have thought my husband would do this act.” She told a friend that “she should keep watch on her maid so that her husband does not do [with her] as Cordiny did with his”.

When Anne found the couple together again, she hit the maid with a sieve, and threw her out of the house. Anne's distress at her husband's infidelity manifested itself in angrily denouncing him, and using her power as a housewife to dismiss the servant.

Lovers shown in a c17th-century engraving. Languedoc's consistories were often used to resolve disputes between men and women







Joachim Beuckelaer's painting *Allegory of Negligence* shows a man relaxing with women in the 16th century. At this time, women were thought to be primarily responsible for sexual sins

far from always successful, and women were frequently abused, forced to do what they did not want to do, and punished for doing that which they did. Nevertheless, my research suggests that we need to reconceptualise female power at this time – to recognise that it did not always conform to the stereotype of hidden, devious influence. Women were also bold, violent and vocal, and exercised power that was far more public and direct than historians have previously recognised.

## A shaming society

The insights of the consistorial records even show us ordinary women using their power beyond the realms of the consistory in pursuit of their own agendas. We see women choosing to have sex outside marriage, despite the potentially devastating consequences in a shaming society; challenging church authorities; and electing not to return to estranged husbands.

Take the example of Catherine Cheysse. In 1592 she had been married to Jehan Bertrand for 21 years and had had four children with him, but the couple had spent 11 of those years apart. Jehan explained that this was because they had lived in Piedmont, where a decade earlier Protestants had been greatly persecuted, so he had been obliged to flee to Languedoc, taking the children with him. Sometime afterwards, he said, when he

## Just as the women of Languedoc were active, decisive and resourceful, so were their counterparts across Europe

thought it safe, he returned to the marital home to collect his wife, but – perhaps unimpressed by being left behind – she “did not want to obey”. At a later date, Catherine heard rumours that her husband and elder son were dead and turned up in Languedoc to see for herself. Jehan again asked her to stay and live with him, “which she did not want to do”, preferring to return to Piedmont. She chose her own path.

Of all evidence the consistories offer us, perhaps the most surprising is the insight they give us into female violence. One example of women coming to blows occurred in 1562, when Jehanne Laudane hit Jehanne Liborde with a stick because, she claimed, Liborde had punched her.

In 1582 Honorat Cany's wife punched Donne Coderque and her daughters in the street, drawing blood. Coderque claimed that Cany's wife had just discovered her husband with Coderque's niece. Coderque had also overheard Cany's wife shouting coarsely at her husband, “that he would just as soon fuck the arsehole of a cow”. In her fury, as she left their house, Cany had lashed out at Coderque and her daughters who were on the road outside.

Men could find themselves on the receiving end of female violence, too. In 1587 in Pont-de-Camarès, Jehan Costeplane asserted that his daughter-in-law had hit him on the head with a bat and made him bleed. Alix Toulouse was reprimanded in 1592 because she “is often angry with her husband in the open street, using cruel insults”, while Sarra de Bely was chastised by the Montauban consistory in 1596 for acting “like a wild beast... being angry with her neighbours... and treating her husband with contempt to the scandal of many good people”.

A woman called Claude Rouveyrolle reported in 1589 that two men had shouted insults at her, attempted to cut her dress all the way up to her bottom – with the words “she is a whore” – and then turned on her husband. The men reported that Claude had hit one of them with a stone and floored him; she made no attempt to deny it.

As these anecdotes prove, the consistorial records of Languedoc are exceptionally valuable. They bring women's agency in the 16th century into a sharper focus than any other sources. They gave women the opportunity to initiate cases, as they seldom could elsewhere. And, as they were free to use, a whole swathe of poor women could now bring suits without paying for the right to do so.

But, while the records themselves are extraordinary, the people that appear in them were surely not. Just as the women of Protestant Languedoc were active, decisive and resourceful so, in all probability, were their counterparts across Europe. In other words, the records allow us to see how ordinary women 400 years ago *really* acted. **H**

**Dr Suzannah Lipscomb** is reader in early modern history at the University of Roehampton. Her books include *Witchcraft* (Penguin Ladybird Expert, 2018)

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In 1740, in a case heard at the Old Bailey, 16-year-old William Duell was found guilty of the rape and murder of a servant, Sarah Griffin. He was hanged at noon on 24 November. His body was laid out on a slab ready for dissection...



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...then he woke up



## Embarrassingly, the officials in charge of executions did not know what to do with murderers who survived

An etching shows a rope breaking during a hanging. This was a relatively commonplace occurrence in the days of the Bloody Code

WORDS BY ELIZABETH HURREN

**T**he case of “Dead-Alive!” Duell was a newspaper sensation. And no wonder. Here was a young man who, following his conviction for the murder and rape of Sarah Griffin, had survived the noose at Tyburn. What was to be done with the revived prisoner? Should Duell’s cheating of the gallows be treated as an act of God, a divine intervention meaning he should be spared? Or should he be hanged again in punishment for heinous crimes?

To understand the authorities’ dilemma, it helps first to understand the shocking level of violence William Duell conspired to visit on poor Sarah Griffin. In September 1740, suffering from severe bronchitis because of the capital’s poor air quality, she had left her London employer and was returning to her family in rural Worcestershire for health reasons. She journeyed via west London, intending to walk to the Midlands. Along the way, she encountered a farmer’s lad, Duell, who offered to hire Sarah a night-lodging. At a barn in Acton, Sarah bedded down on a hay bale. Duell then went to the nearby Captain’s public house. There he met five men and boasted about Sarah’s whereabouts. Soon after, the group began attacking Sarah.

It was reported in court that the ringleader, “George Curtis alias Tag-Mutton... put his hands several times up the woman’s clothes, and swore if she did not hold her tongue, he would kill her.” Sarah tried to defend herself by crying out that “she was pox’d” with a sexually transmitted disease. But Curtis shouted back: “Pox’d or pox’d not, by God I will [have you].” She was held down, and experienced multiple rapes and sexual assaults. She was badly

beaten and robbed. According to Samuel Lock, local surgeon, Sarah told him the next morning that she “believed she could not live”. Sarah died the next day from “a stroke”. Her dead body was bloodied and bruised.

In court it was established that the main culprit who incited the others to rape and murder was “the youth William Duell... who had little education, and what little reading he had he had almost forgotten, being an obstinate boy”. His father was a respectable shoemaker in Acton. At first the family denied the accusations but the evidence in court was conclusive. After issuing a death warrant, the court recorder noted that Duell “with tears in his eyes, acknowledged himself guilty of rape, robbery and murder”.

The judge pronounced that being a minor lacking in education did not exonerate Duell from being hanged for such a wicked offence. What happened next would cause a commotion in the national press and present the authorities with an almighty dilemma. As the court recorder put it: “Twas very singular indeed; but not unaccountable as some people make it, since such have but a very superficial notion of anatomy, may easily conceive how a person very soon cut down [from the hangman’s rope] may shew even strong signs of life.” Duell had survived the gallows.

### A cold November day

The London newspapers revealed the details of Duell’s noon-day execution at Tyburn, where there was “a northerly gale of wind with rain, snow and hail”. Duell had been suspended from the rope “for more than 50 minutes”. On being cut down, his young body was a valuable teaching prize. It was put in a hackney coach and transported back to Surgeons’ Hall near the Old Bailey. The body was brought in through the “under-door” at street level, taken up a spiral staircase, and “laid out in a passage”. In attendance was a washerwoman tasked with swilling down the corpse and preparing it for the next dissection demonstration at the anatomy theatre. But suddenly she heard William Duell “groan very much” after “about 10 minutes”. Immediately, the duty surgeon bled the prisoner “after which he reviv’d very fast”. At this point, Duell could not respond to questions, and so his body was warmed up with wine and hot water. The City of London sheriff was summoned and he reported that Duell “lay very easy and composed”.

The next morning, the duty sheriff and surgeon questioned Duell. The teenager remembered nothing about the execution, but did recall receiving the last rites. At the anatomy theatre, it was decided to return Duell back to the Press Yard at Newgate,





where he was fed a “mess of broth”, which he ate “very heartily”. There appeared to be no adverse physical side-effects. When asked, Duell could recite the lord’s prayer fluently.

Duell was socially and legally dead. But he was not *medically* dead. This alive non-person did not officially exist in Georgian society.

A week after the execution, an Old Bailey hearing was convened to decide what to do with Duell and whether to hang him. If a rope broke on execution day – a common occurrence – the condemned was usually straight-away tied up again. But the prosecution pointed out that rescheduling this execution would betray to spectators that it was possible to survive the gallows. That admission not only made the law look ludicrous, but called into question the deterrence value of the capital code. Then there was the question of divine intervention, whether God had spared Duell. The authorities were alarmed that the story’s puzzling religious overtones might gain traction in the popular press. It was unanimously decided “to transport William Duell for life to North America”. We don’t know what happened to Duell next because he was never entered in the transportation lists to America. However, official reports reveal that “he was successfully transported”.

At almost 300 years remove, it’s a shocking case, both for the misogynistic violence of the crime and for the hangman’s apparent incompetence. Yet what’s arguably more surprising is that, as the words of the court recorder hint, Duell’s survival was *not that unusual*. Housebreaker John ‘Half-Hanged’ Smith, for instance, was hanged for around 15 minutes on Christmas Eve in 1705, but survived after he was cut down. These kinds of incidents continued into the 19th century. When John Holloway was executed in 1831 for the “horrible murder, almost unparalleled in atrocity” of his wife, Celia, it was noted by the hangman that even after an hour on the scaffold his neck was not broken, meaning there was a risk he might revive. On being cut down from the gallows, “the body had to be made safe by the surgeon”, who severed the carotid artery in the neck with a lancet to speed up the dying process.

## Uncomfortable secrets

Such incidents occurred in part because establishing medically when a prisoner died during the execution process was not an exact science. As such, the case of William Duell was noteworthy not for what happened, but because it revealed an uncomfortable secret: officials in charge of executions did not know what to do with murderers who revived.

One reason so many of those who went to the gallows survived was that most executions



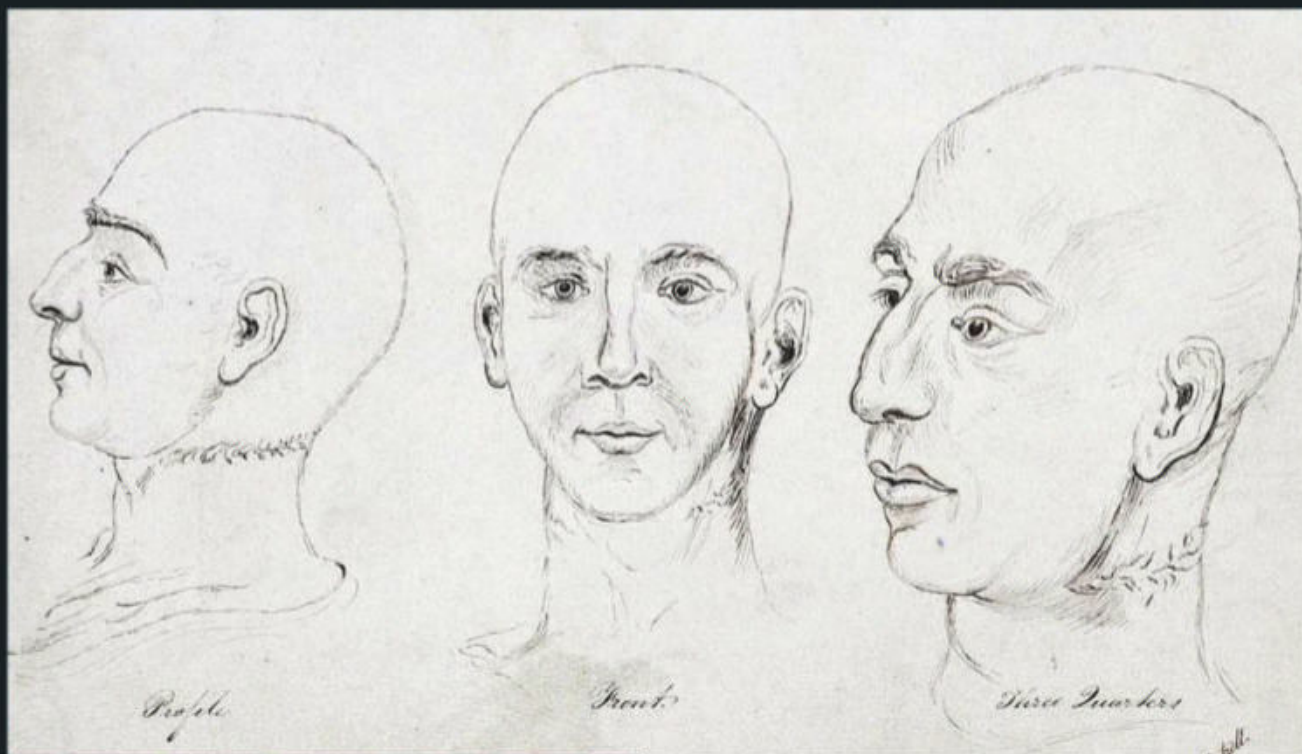
were staged in deep winter, scheduled so as to keep the body fresher for dissection. But in the bitter cold, a lifeless-looking body could be deceiving. Most prisoners passed out, constrained by the hangman’s rope. To the crowd, the spectacle of the condemned spontaneously urinating and defecating surely denoted the moment of death. However, in cold weather, most people went into a comatose state during their struggle on the rope. What the authorities started better to appreciate was that the dangling murderer might look dead, but could still be alive. Physically fit criminals, capable of killing with their bare hands, often had strong bull necks that did not break on the rope. And younger prisoners with strong survival instincts kicked for life on the gallows. As they struggled, so death took longer. In popular culture, this was called the “dying hard” of the “Dead-Alive”.

Out of mercy, to help the condemned die quickly, the crowd in a short-drop execution – the description for a hanging where the condemned sits on a cart or horse that is then pulled away – might tug down on the body and swing it round to get the neck to break cleanly. But whether the crowd intervened or not, double-checking on medical death was done hastily, generally with either a small hand-mirror to detect breathing, or blowing snuff up the nose to produce a sneeze. Other techniques included standing a cup of water on the chest to check for signs of movement or

This engraving by William Hogarth shows the final instalment of a sequence of artworks called *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (1751). In it, the fictional Tom Nero is being dissected for anatomical studies at Cutlerian theatre near Newgate prison after being hanged for murder. Nero looks like the Dead-Alive, as though he can see and smell his own executed body on the dissection table.

The chief physician sits in the centre on a high-backed chair, resembling a high court judge. He is surrounded by various medical men, including penal surgeons, who did gallows work. The skeletons of dissected criminals were usually refused a Christian burial and so were displayed as specimens, as can be seen top left and top right





Sketches of the murderer John Thurtell, who was executed in 1824, show the marks left by the noose. His body was dissected at St Bartholomew's Hospital

**Anatomists were in the unedifying position of having to try to revive murderers or committing human vivisection**

swiping a swan's feather along the throat to stimulate a swallowing sensation. Most penal surgeons learned nonetheless to be cautious when receiving so-called corpses from the gallows. They had discovered at first hand the amazing capacity of the human brain to trigger the body's survival mechanisms when in trauma. It may even have been William Duell who first alerted penal surgeons to this physical set of possibilities.

But whatever Duell's place in the medical history timeline, this knowledge is now used to save lives. Working with the body's own biological defences against trauma, therapeutic hypothermia means letting the brain reduce the temperature of the body. This preserves energy, keeps the vital organs such as the heart and lungs alive, and ensures that optimum oxygenate levels are maintained to prevent major brain damage in a trauma like being hanged in the winter cold.

## The surgeons' dilemma

By the early 19th century, leading London anatomists were confronted with having to break the Hippocratic Oath. Instead of "doing no harm" they were in the unedifying position of having to try to revive dangerous murderers such as Duell. Or committing human vivisection if the prisoner had a faint-beating heart but was brain-dead.

William Clift (1775–1849) was a renowned anatomist and he often worked with the famous penal surgeon Sir William Blizard (1743–1835). Clift kept detailed notebooks that reveal the precautions both men took together before releasing a body for dissection. He recorded how the physical processes of dying were monitored every 10 minutes post-execution, until they were fully satisfied that the condemned had expired in the heart, lungs and brain. In fact, in 10 out of 35 well-documented cases in the Royal College of Surgeons archives, the executed prisoner had not died on the rope even after the

standard-drop execution (when the prisoner was dropped between four and six feet, increasing the chance of the neck breaking) had been introduced.

When James Leary was executed for murder at Newgate on Monday 20 September 1813 at eight o'clock in the morning, for example, he survived being hanged. William Clift carefully noted how the condemned reacted to "stimulation until a little after two" in the afternoon, six hours after execution. Leary was about "5ft 8ins high, 44 years of age, and not remarkably stout". Nonetheless, his physical prowess and the inclement weather had helped him survive. A journalist with the *Caledonian Mercury* reported on 27 September, that "Leary was observed to have been a full quarter of an hour in a convulsive agony" on the rope. In other words, Leary fought hard to survive.

Leary had been hanged with another murderer, John Denton. The same newspaper reporter thought that he saw that: "Denton was dead already as soon as he was let drop." But when Denton was opened up, Clift noted he too showed signs of life "by stimulation until ten minutes past three" in the afternoon, seven hours post-execution.

William Clift's records suggest that Denton's strong neck did not break during his execution. Leary and Denton were thus for a time both technically the Dead-Alive, just as William Duell had been 70 years earlier. They did not survive more than half a day in the dissection-room because, in all probability, it had not been cold enough to keep their brains oxygenated enough to survive without permanent brain damage.

If they had been hanged in midwinter, they might have revived to be "transported for life to Australia", the destination in such cases by the early 19th century. However, we will never know how many enjoyed such a reprieve because the records of such cases were destroyed. The authorities were simply too embarrassed to allow the cases of the 'dead-alive' to reach the public domain. **H**

**Dr Elizabeth Hurren** lectures at the University of Leicester. She's the author of *Dissecting the Criminal Corpse: Staging Post-Execution Punishment in Early Modern England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), which is free to download on Open Access

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# The long journey to a new life

Following the expulsion by Idi Amin of Uganda's Asian population in the summer of 1972, some 28,000 people arrived in Britain in a matter of weeks - to a mixed reception from their new neighbours. **Becky Taylor** charts their story

Accompanies the new BBC Four series *A Very British History*







In a photograph taken at Bishop's Stortford railway station in Hertfordshire, 1972, resettled Ugandan Asians wait for the train that will take them to their new home



# Fleeing Idi Amin

When, in the summer of 1973, the Muhammed family stepped off the train at Wick, 20 miles south of John o’Groats,

they did not know it, but they had the distinction of being the northernmost Ugandan Asian family in Britain. At five o’clock in the evening, the Muhammeds – mother, father, and five children aged from five to 14 – had set off from Hemswell, an ex-RAF base in North Lincolnshire that had been serving as a resettlement camp. Arriving by train in Wick 16 hours later, disorientated and with only a limited grasp of British geography, the first question they asked on arrival was: “Are we far from London?” What were the steps that had taken the Muhammeds, who only months before had been living in Uganda, to the far reaches of north-east Scotland?

We could trace the first step on their journey back to the late 19th century. This was the time when Britain, as an imperial power, started encouraging migration from one of its holdings, India, to its new acquisitions in east Africa. Finding much of the local populace unwilling to engage in paid labour, the colonial government solved the manpower shortage by shipping workers across the Indian Ocean to build the new railways and other infrastructure needed to develop the territories. Accompanying them, and in their wake, came Indian clerks, traders and an emerging professional class who quickly created a new layer of society – servicing not only the newcomers, but the African population and colonialists too.

Fast forward half a century and we reach the second step on the Muhammeds’ journey to Wick. Demands for African independence brought growing criticism of east Africa’s Asian population, who were described as the “Jews of Africa” and “bloodsuckers” who dominated the civil service, the professions and the urban economy. Aware of the tensions, and to reassure east African Asians that independence wouldn’t result in catastrophe, the British government pledged to allow those in Uganda and Kenya to retain their UK passports (to which all citizens of Britain’s colonies were eligible) and their right of entry to Britain.

All too soon this was needed. First in Kenya, followed quickly by Uganda (which became independent in 1962), a series of ‘Africanisation’ policies were enacted. These



Nearly all of the workers who built the Uganda Railway (1896–1901) were from British India. They were joined by clerks, merchants and professionals, and many settled in east Africa

## Amid demands for independence, nationalists called east Africa’s Asian population the “Jews of Africa”

banned non-citizens from the civil service and running businesses, and were accompanied by street violence and intimidation. Britain responded to the resulting exodus of Kenyan Asians by tightening immigration law: the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, strengthened by the Immigration Act 1971, introduced a requirement to demonstrate a “close connection” with the UK either via birth, or through parents or grandparents. In doing this, it excluded most Asian UK passport holders from unrestricted entry to Britain and reneged on the promises made to east African Asians on independence.

By the time Idi Amin announced, in August 1972, that all Ugandan Asians had 90 days to leave the country and could take with them the equivalent of just £50, they no longer had any

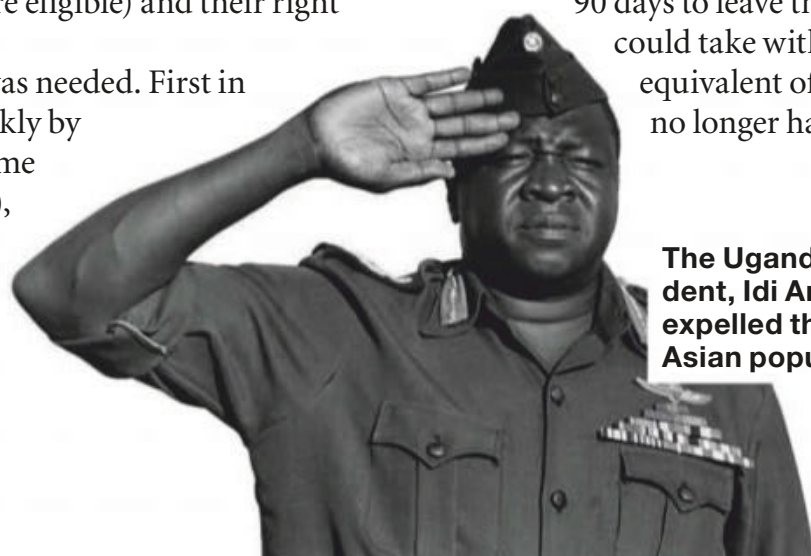
automatic right of entry to the UK. It was only as a result of intense international pressure that Ted Heath’s Conservative government accepted responsibility for all UK passport-holding Ugandan Asians and allowed them to enter Britain. The new arrivals became the responsibility of the rapidly assembled Ugandan Resettlement Board (URB), which was charged with finding homes and employment for those forced to flee.

### Economic hardship

This was no small task. The arrival of 28,000 Ugandan Asians in Britain in the autumn and winter of 1972–73 happened at an unpropitious time economically. After three decades of postwar prosperity, near full employment and economic growth, things were changing. Housing was limited and unemployment was the highest it had been for decades. This gave ammunition to opponents of immigration and prompted anti-immigration demonstrations in cities across Britain. The National Front was only one of a range of anti-immigrant groups capitalising on such attitudes, tying rising prices, economic difficulty and uncontrolled immigration together into a toxic mix of racism and street action.

There were those who argued that families such as the Muhammeds were unwelcome immigrants, taking housing, jobs and resources from hard-pressed Britons. Indeed, a few days after the Muhammeds arrived in Wick, a local family in a nearby village had their house burned to the ground. The next day the mother came into the local social work department demanding a new, fully furnished house. “After all,” she said, “it is my right, isn’t it? You did that for a Ugandan Asian family.”

And it was the government’s response to these kinds of attitudes that created the third step on the Muhammeds’ journey to



The Ugandan president, Idi Amin, who expelled the country’s Asian population





In September 1972, those opposed to allowing Ugandan Asians to enter Britain take part in a protest march from Victoria to Hyde Park. The march went past the home of Enoch Powell, Downing Street and Buckingham Palace



A Ugandan Asian family arrive at their new home, London, 1972. While there was opposition to offering help, this was also a moment when voluntary groups played a key role in making the newcomers welcome



Protests against the Immigration Act of 1971, which restricted the rights of Commonwealth citizens to settle in the United Kingdom



# Fleeing Idi Amin

Ugandan Asian children enjoy a meal at the canteen of the former Royal Military Police Barracks in Kensington, London, 1972. On first arriving in the UK, newcomers were often housed in military premises



Wick: the policy of dispersal. Anxious to diffuse tensions over the new arrivals, the URB divided the nation into “red” areas, which should receive none of the expellees, and “green” areas, to which the newcomers should be directed. Red areas, which included the major towns of the Midlands and most areas of London, were places that already had significant populations of newly arrived international migrants, including established and growing Asian communities. Not only did these areas have significant opportunities for work, but they also had existing shops, places of worship and cultural events catering for their new Asian populations. Yet rather than seeing these as reasons to encourage Ugandan Asians to settle in these areas, the URB instead declared them “full”.

Leicester City Council gained particular notoriety during the crisis for placing an advert in the *Ugandan Argus* newspaper warning Ugandan Asians who were coming to Britain of no houses, no jobs and full schools in the city: “In your own interests and those of your family you should... not come to Leicester.” And so it was to Scotland, all of which was designated green, and to Britain’s new towns, provinces and rural areas that the URB looked to house the expellees. Despite this, many of the expellees simply bypassed the official reception and resettlement programme and went straight to friends and relatives in Leicester.

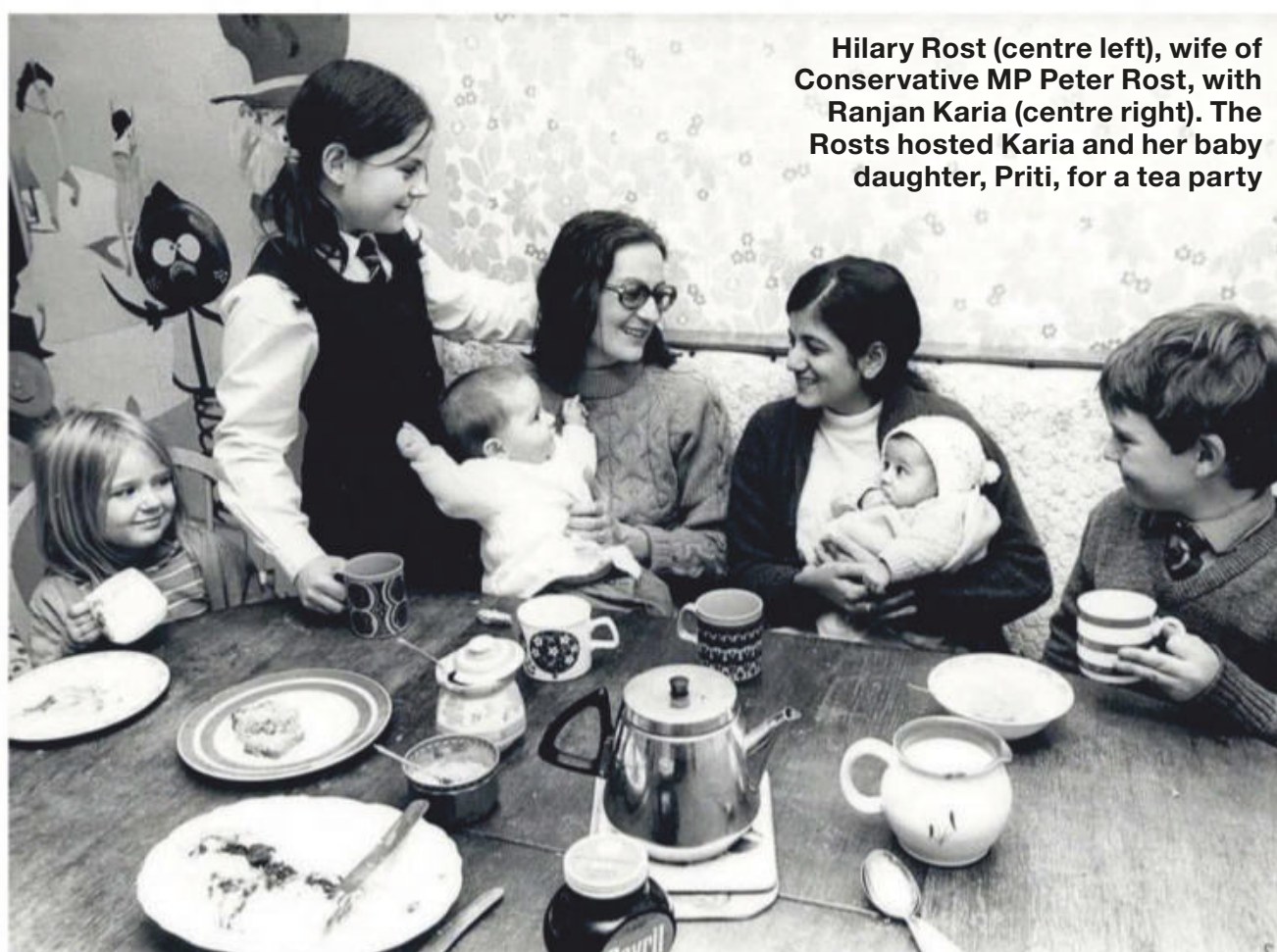
## A warm welcome

It’s important to recognise that this image of Britain as a hostile, grudging host of its former imperial subjects is only half the picture. Britain was changing. As much as postwar immigration, the counter-cultural movements of the 1960s were reshaping the country, making it more diverse, open to new ideas and people. For every person complaining that the expellees were threatening British jobs, there was someone else ready to give up their time to welcome the newcomers, and to try to make them feel at home.

Volunteers were drawn from all strata of British life, and more than 30,000 people became involved in reception and resettlement efforts. Showing the richness and diversity of British life at the beginning of the 1970s, volunteer rosters included representatives from the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Catholic Committee for Racial Justice, the Indian Workers’ Association, the Zoroastrian (Parsi) Association of Great Britain and the British Council of Churches, as well as from newer groups such as the League of Overseas Pakistanis and the West Middlesex British Asian Relief Committee. Although the URB provided core funds and an administrative structure for the reception



Determined to build new lives, many Ugandan Asians went into business. Here, shopkeeper Jagbash Patel serves a customer at his newsagents in Billericay in 1976



Hilary Rost (centre left), wife of Conservative MP Peter Rost, with Ranjan Karia (centre right). The Rosts hosted Karia and her baby daughter, Priti, for a tea party



## Today, Britain's Ugandan Asian population is seen as one of immigration's success stories

effort, volunteers worked as advisers, baggage handlers, clerical workers and telephone operators, and ran activities and social events. Gujarati-speaking volunteers became crucial interpreters as expellees sought to make sense of their new surroundings.

And this was to create the fourth and final step on the Muhammeds' path to Wick. The URB had no powers to force councils or individuals to allocate housing or employment to the expellees. Rather, the URB relied on goodwill and sympathy with the Ugandan Asians' plight to generate offers of homes or work from councils or employers. It looked to local voluntary organisations to prepare those houses for habitation and to make expellees feel at home.

In many towns, it was the WRVS (Women's Royal Voluntary Service) that worked to source clothing, bedding, electric fires and heaters, while the dietary needs of the newcomers led local volunteers to put some effort into finding specialised kitchen equipment and utensils for cooking Indian food. No small part of settling in expellees involved introducing them to the vagaries of the British weather: "Coming from the warm climate in Uganda to the depths of a wet... winter, means that most Ugandans have inadequate clothing on arrival... The families had never known weeks of constant cold weather... [We tell] them exactly what to wear to keep warm, how to make fires that would warm all the rooms, what food would help to build up protection against colds..."

As well as getting help to tackle these practical difficulties, families also had to seek work and get their children into schools, often while facing language barriers and what could feel like an immense cultural divide. In Preston, local volunteers arranged for a female English tutor to visit women in their houses, while the local churches, led by the Methodists, 'adopted' individual families, visiting them regularly, inviting children to join the youth and sports clubs and acting as an informal point of contact. Such efforts at hospitality and welcome were vital to those making their first steps in their new lives in Britain.

Sudeep Kaur Bone's family moved into a council house in Thetford, an experience

that she remembered very positively: "The local community gathered up, I think through the church and all that, and we were given a council place and completely furnished... to a point where they even got the food for the first week... And there was another, a Punjabi family, they came and they brought the lentils and... the dahls and the spices and everything for us."

Even the Muhammeds, up in Wick, were less isolated than it first appeared. The north of Scotland, too, was changing. They found in the town five families of Pakistani traders and shopkeepers, people who worked hard to make them feel welcome.

### Opening doors

Today, Britain's Ugandan Asian population is celebrated as one of immigration's success stories, seen as central to the economic and cultural strength of cities such as Leicester. But this outcome was by no means clear 45 years ago. To what can we attribute their success? In part, it was down to the reception and resettlement programme. While certainly flawed, it found people homes and work, while the massive voluntary effort far surpassed the activities of rightwing groups, and created a genuine atmosphere of welcome and friendship.

Crucial, too, was the support they found within the existing British-Asian population, who opened their doors to relatives and friends until the newcomers were able to establish themselves. Atul Pattni, who came to England as a child, remembered that on arrival his family stayed with his aunt in Leicester in a "three-bedroom terrace house with, oh, nearly what 16, 17 people" living in it for three months before his father was able to find a house for the family to rent. People found work for expellees in their businesses, or went into partnership with them, building up an enterprise from scratch. And, of course, there was the hard work and resilience of the Ugandan Asians themselves. Idi Amin may have forced them to leave behind their material wealth, but he could not take away their education, their skills or their determination to build a new life in Britain. **H**

**Becky Taylor** is a reader in modern history at the University of East Anglia. She was the historical consultant on two episodes of the BBC Four series *A Very British History* (see below)

### DISCOVER MORE

#### TELEVISION

► **A Very British History**, which includes an episode on Ugandan Asian refugees, presented by Meera Sodha (see right), airs on BBC Four in February



## MY FAMILY'S STORY

Food writer Meera Sodha, presenter of the BBC Four documentary, describes her grandfather's dramatic escape from Uganda



“My family's Ugandan history began with my great-grandfather who moved there from Gujarat in 1913, sold on promises by the British Raj, which had pitched Uganda and Kenya as lands of opportunity for hard-working Indians. His five sons, including my grandfather, followed in the 1940s and the family built a thriving business empire that included an orange juice factory and printing press.

When Idi Amin announced the expulsion of Asian families from the country, the family embarked on a dangerous journey to Entebbe, where, as British passport holders, they could take a flight to the UK. My grandfather had heard rumours that Ugandan Asian girls were being raped as they fled the country, so he wrapped my 16-year-old mother in bedsheets and hid her in the back of the van. Despite being stopped by armed guards en route to the airport, they made their flight and ended up at Stradishall camp in Suffolk with just one suitcase of belongings between the five of them

Within two weeks of their arrival, my grandfather had accepted a job as a lorry driver at Scunthorpe Steelworks and the family moved to a council house in Winterton, five miles from Scunthorpe.

Having an Asian family in the area caused quite a stir and there was even an article about them in the local newspaper. Some people were anxious about having an Indian family nearby; others were ambivalent. But people were mostly welcoming – some brought cakes or offered use of their washing machines. The headmistress at the local school even invited my mother and younger brother into her garden to show them English flowers and teach them how to take tea.

My mother has always said she was excited to move to the UK – the family had always considered themselves Indian and British, even when living in Uganda. My grandfather, too, was determined to make the best of the move. He became one of the many success stories of the Ugandan-Asian immigration, saving hard to open a new business and prove his worth in the country that had offered him refuge. ”



## FRONTLINE NURSE

# *A lady in the line of fire*

In the latest instalment of our occasional series profiling remarkable yet unheralded characters from history, **Simon Boyd** introduces Lady Sybil Grey, an indomitable Englishwoman who, as a nurse in Russia, led a field hospital and had a grandstand view of the February 1917 revolution that toppled the tsar

ILLUSTRATION BY SUE GENT

**T**he fortune teller sized up the woman in front of her. “You are unlike any other woman I have met,” she said, “you are nearly entirely male and have lived seven previous lives as a man and have fought as a soldier. Nevertheless, you do have a very strong mother love and, if you do marry, you will have two children.”

The woman being addressed was Lady Sybil Grey (1882–1966), second daughter of Albert, 4th Earl Grey. She was 37 years old, and had spent the First World War doing a range of adventurous jobs. First serving as a VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) nurse at a hospital in her father’s seat in Northumbria, she was then sent to open a British hospital in the Russian capital, Petrograd (now St Petersburg). As the fortune teller had divined, Lady Sybil loved a challenge. She served in Russia for nearly 18 months, was wounded at the front, became embroiled in the murder of Rasputin and witnessed the revolution that toppled the tsar.

### **Aristocratic start**

Brought up in a world of great privilege at Howick Hall in Northumberland – her grandfather was private secretary to Queen Victoria – Lady Sybil was imbued with a sense of duty and service, an interest in politics, and a love of adventure. Before the First World War, she had travelled to much of Europe, had been big-game hunting in the Congo, had voyaged round the world with her parents, and had lived for seven years in Canada where her father was governor general from 1904–11. She loved Canada’s vast wildernesses, its mighty mountains and fishing in its huge rivers. Above all, she loved hearing about the lives of ordinary people – especially the pioneers exploring the wilds. Speaking 40 years later, she said: “If I were

a young man now I think I would emigrate to Canada, that land of sunshine and illimitable possibilities, where if you are prepared to work hard you can hardly fail to succeed.”

But her greatest challenge was in going out to Russia in 1915 to set up the Anglo-Russian Hospital, a volunteer institution with a staff of British doctors and nurses. She chose a royal palace belonging to the Grand Duke Dmitry Pavlovitch, a cousin of Tsar Nicholas II, as the site of her 200-bed hospital.

She enjoyed the social life of the court, its operas and ballets, and met Empress Alexandra, Tsar Nicholas II’s wife. “I had expected a cold, tragic face with all the life gone out of it, but it was a beautiful face, she spoke beautiful English and was very easy to get on with,” Lady Sybil recalled. “But one came away with a heavy heart and thanking God one wasn’t an empress, especially this one. There was an atmosphere about her that cried out for sympathy, I have not felt it so strongly in anyone.” Lady Sybil was right to worry for the empress. As more Russians lost their lives in the First World War, and as the imperial government grew more incompetent and uncaring, people at all levels of society began to criticise the regime.

In the meantime, Lady Sybil headed for the eastern front to lead a field hospital in modern-day Belarus. Here, she was wounded in the face by grenade shrapnel while observing army bombing practice. She was repatriated to recover. Alexandra, mother of King George V, wrote to Lady Sybil’s father: “I am so sorry to hear that your daughter has been wounded, like a soldier! But excuse me, I am sure that the dear girl ought never have gone where she did.”

When she returned to Russia three months later, Lady Sybil found herself at the centre of a huge crisis for the regime: the murder of

Grigori Rasputin, the licentious self-proclaimed holy man who had a hold on the empress because he seemed to be able to alleviate her son’s haemophilia. Grand Duke Dmitry Pavlovich, the owner of the palace in which Lady Sybil’s hospital was housed, was one of Rasputin’s killers. After the murder, Pavlovich entrusted Lady Sybil with the keys to his private apartment in the palace, telling her to give them to no one. She wore them under her dress until the danger was past.

### **Trouble ahead**

Though Lady Sybil moved in the same circles as some of the most powerful people in Russia, she was keenly aware of the shortages affecting the country’s poor. “It is the food question that is so appalling,” she said. “Can you imagine what it is like to stand out in the street in a queue all night when it is below zero, waiting to buy bread? It is damnable.”

Finally, she lost all patience: “If I were a Russian, I would be a red hot revolutionary – there is nothing else for it. They will have a terrible revolution some time.” In fact, the first of two revolutions in 1917, the February uprising that swept away the tsar’s regime, followed a couple of weeks later. From the hospital, Lady Sybil witnessed the massacre of peaceful demonstrators that began the insurrection. “At 3pm, I looked down the street and saw soldiers lie down in the snow and fire a volley into the crowd on the bridge,” she said. “Ten men were hit and brought in – three died almost immediately. Soldiers had fired on the people, now nothing could prevent the revolution.”

She protected her hospital and staff – they hung a huge red cross made from blankets and an old Father Christmas costume outside the hospital and flew the Union Jack prominently in the entrance. When revolu-



# LADY SYBIL GREY




*After Rasputin's murder, one of the killers entrusted Lady Sybil with the keys to his private apartment*

tionary troops broke into the hospital, Lady Sybil faced them coolly. An officer, backed by 16 soldiers with bayonets, pointed a revolver at her chest and demanded underlinen for bandages, telling her: "It is an order not a request." Later, she commented drily: "Sixteen bayonets won the day."

Following the revolution, she returned home, heading up a hospital at the grand Dorchester House on Park Lane, before taking command of the Women's Legion in France – the first all-women organisation to be recognised by the Army Council. Respon-

sible for 500 British women, her duties included trying to keep them from having affairs with their staff officers and sending offenders back to base camp. Her charges thought her a stickler for discipline.

After the war, Lady Sybil married Lambert Middleton, and raised two children, a son and daughter. She was involved in charitable work and experimented with the new technology of cinema. One of her films, of Darnick in the Scottish borders, was later screened on BBC TV as an "unknown masterpiece of amateur cinema". 

.....  
**Simon Boyd** is Lady Sybil Grey's grandson. He worked as an educational publisher for 40 years, as well as travelling and researching his grandmother's story. He lives in Cambridge

## DISCOVER MORE

### BOOKS

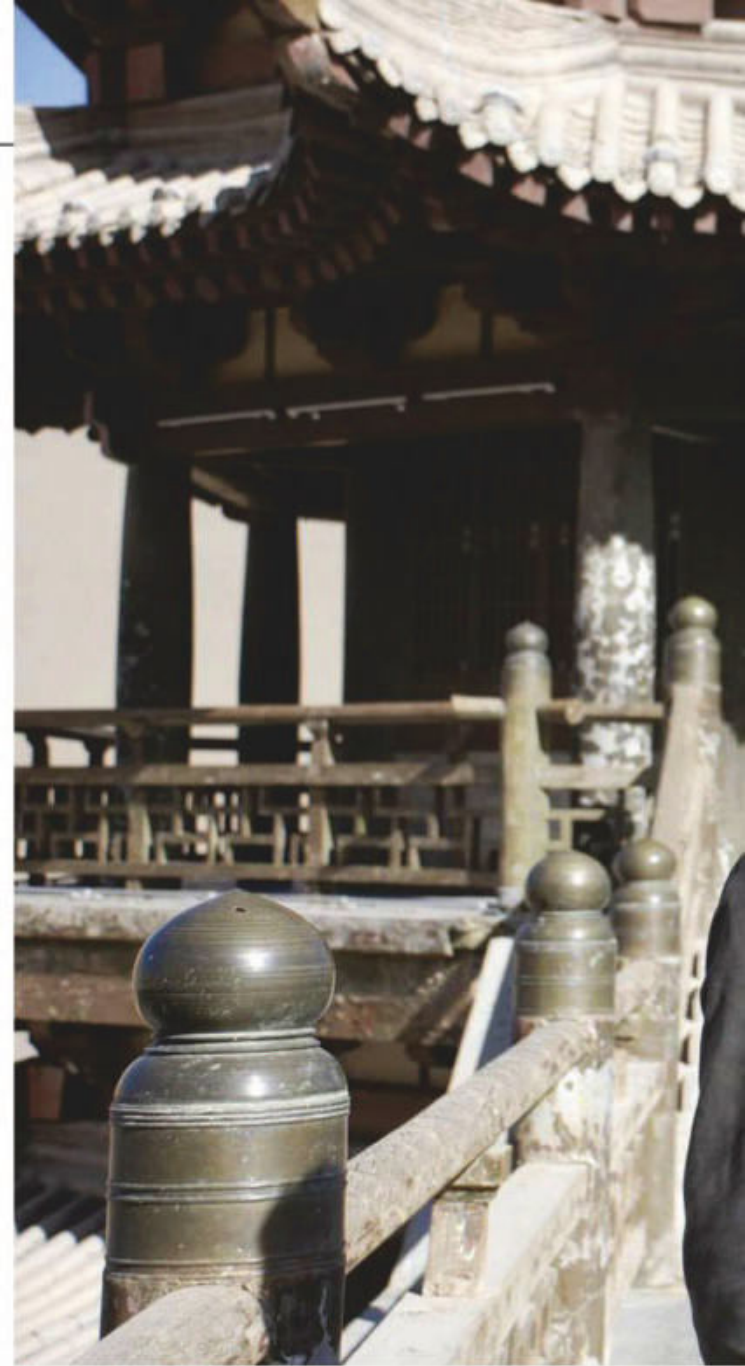
► **Lady Sybil: Empire, War and Revolution** by Simon Boyd (Hayloft Publishing Ltd, 2017)

► **The Forgotten Hospital** by Michael Harmer (Springwood Books, 1982)



# How my history degree led to my dream job

From film producer to historical novelist, four history graduates reveal their routes to exciting careers in the field, and offer some tips for those wishing to follow in their footsteps



## HISTORICAL NOVELIST

**Cesca Major**

Author of *The Silent Hours* and other novels

“My career as a historical novelist began when I was working as a history teacher at a secondary school and searching for something to teach my Year 9 class. A colleague of mine told me about a little-known event from the Second World War, and the research was so absorbing I found I couldn’t stop thinking about what I had learned. I decided to fictionalise the story and my debut novel, *The Silent Hours*, was born.

Since then I have written three novels that all focus on little-known tragedies that occurred during the 20th century – attempting to bring these events to life through the people who might have lived through them. I also write romantic comedies under my pseudonym, Rosie

Blake. Historical novels involve a lot of research, which can be fascinating but time-consuming. It is also important not to lecture the reader or start to throw in interesting but ultimately irrelevant details. It’s a fine line.

Reading history at university taught me research skills, but also means I’m always tempted to spend my time reading books and not writing my own! I work in my writing shed at home and, so far, it has been an incredibly satisfying career, which works well alongside looking after my three young children. I adore attending book events, starting a new project and hearing from readers. The writing community is friendly and supportive, and I consider myself very fortunate to be part of this wonderful world.

**“Having read history at university, I’m tempted to spend my time reading books and not writing my own!”**



## PUBLIC HISTORIAN

**Sam Willis**

Historian, archaeologist, author and TV presenter

“My career as a public historian began in the final years of my PhD. My supervisor was approached by a publisher to write a series of illustrated books on warships – he was too busy and passed them on to me. They became the *Fighting Ships* series. This led to an intense period of writing, and I was increasingly approached to appear on TV documentaries. And then came my big break, when I was asked to present a documentary for BBC Four. All I had to do was spend three weeks in Antigua! This became *Nelson’s Caribbean Hell-hole*, a show about the excavation of a mass grave under a Caribbean sand dune. The success of that led to my first series, *Shipwrecks: Britain’s Sunken History*, and I haven’t stopped since then – nearly a decade of working as a public historian.

My career has constantly evolved, and I think all

historians must learn to pivot and change. I started to focus on naval and military history, before seeing the potential of bringing my approach to other historical themes or questions, such as outlaws, weapons and the Silk Road.

Most people think your identity as a historian is all about your chosen subject – it isn’t; it’s about your approach. I’m an archaeologist as well as a historian, and bring as many creative approaches as I can to anything I’m studying. This has now manifested itself in my latest work: the podcast and live show *Histories of the Unexpected*. The idea is that *everything* has a history, even the most unexpected subjects, such as clouds or rubble, and that everything links together in unexpected ways. It has fundamentally transformed the way I think about the past – and the present – and I am absolutely loving it.





Sam Willis travelled to China to film a BBC Four series on the history of the Silk Road



## CURATOR

**Lucy Chiswell**

Assistant curator, Royal Academy of Arts

“I have always been fascinated by the lives of objects and the journeys of artefacts through time. Growing up near Oxford, I visited the Ashmolean Museum a lot as a child, and my mother would take us on cultural pilgrimages across the country. I remember my cousin saying to me that, when she grew up, she wanted to be a curator at the British Museum, and I had no idea what she meant (incidentally, she’s now a retail consultant). It was only during my master’s degree, when I took part in a Renaissance drawings exhibition, that I understood what it involved. I realised that few things in life had thrilled me as much as studying and handling a Tintoretto drawing and thought, yes, this is what I want.

Studying ancient history for my BA prompted me to fall in love with Rome and move there after finishing my degree. It was in Rome that I discovered the Renaissance. I came home to

do an MA in history of art, specialising in 16th-century Italy, and that was that.

Every day is different, and I work on multiple projects with different people all at once. I am currently working on *The Renaissance Nude*, which opens in March, and a major show spanning Antony Gormley’s 45-year career, which will take place in the autumn. Typically, my day involves creating exhibition graphics and audio guides, writing and editing texts, sending loan letters, giving talks, taking tours, reading and – perhaps most importantly – looking!

For anyone who wants to get into curating, I’d advise them to volunteer at a museum or gallery. It’s a great way to get a sense of working in a cultural institution, and when it comes to jobs, experience like this is gold dust. It is also important to realise that curating is not academia: it’s about having people skills and an eye for detail as much as reading books.



## FILM PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

**Steve Humphries**

Founder of Testimony Films

“I wake up every morning thinking how lucky I am to still have my own small independent production company, and to be able to create films I’m passionate about. It is, for me, simply one of the best jobs in the world.

What I love most is getting people to open up on camera and tell deeply personal stories on issues that matter. These can range from testimonies by the last survivors of the First World War (as in our recent BBC Four series *The Last Tommies*) to the protests of Hull fishwives for better safety at sea (as in our BBC Four programme *Hull’s Headscarf Heroes*).

One of the films I’m proudest of is *Sex in a Cold Climate* (1998), in which young women locked away in Magdalene laundries in Ireland told their stories. It led to one of the biggest helpline responses in Channel 4’s history, directly inspired Peter Mullen’s feature film *The Magdalene Sisters* and helped expose abuse in the Catholic church. I feel it helped change the world a little bit for the better, which is the ultimate aim of the films we make.

I got into the TV industry in the 1980s, helped by a doctoral thesis and book – *Hooligans or Rebels?* – based on interviews I’d done with unruly working-class children. It documented strikes against the cane by schoolchildren in 1911.

**“Attempt to deal with rejection in a positive way, keep going and feel lucky!”**

I knew nothing about the technical aspects of the industry then – and still don’t. For me it is all about identifying a powerful untold story and getting the right people to tell it.

A history degree can help get you to an interview, but you don’t necessarily need one.

What you need is to be passionate, tenacious and strong-willed. And you need to get lucky. There are so many applications for researcher jobs in TV – and that’s the best way in – that you have to make yourself stand out.

The first rule is to research the company you are applying to, watch some of what they have made and mention this in your application. Another rule is to go to TV festivals – hang out in the meeting places and bars and start networking. The final piece of advice is: don’t take rejection personally. There is a lot of rejection in this business as it’s so competitive. It’s all about dealing with it in a positive way, keeping going – and feeling lucky! **H**



Steve Humphries’ 1998 film explored the stories of women who worked in Magdalene laundries such as St Mary’s Training School, Dublin (pictured here in 1935–38)



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Experts discuss and review the latest history releases

# BOOKS



Richard J Evans, pictured in London. His life of Eric Hobsbawm is the first biography to be written of the 20th-century historian

Photography by Fran Monks



## INTERVIEW / RICHARD J EVANS

*“For Hobsbawm, communism was a matter of life and death”*

*Richard J Evans talks to Rob Attar about his new biography of the world-renowned Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm, and discusses the legacy of his work today*



## PROFILE RICHARD J EVANS

Sir Richard J Evans is regius professor emeritus of history at Cambridge University. He is the author of numerous books, including *In Defence of History* (Granta, 1997), *The Coming of the Third Reich* (Allen Lane, 2003) and *The Pursuit of Power: Europe, 1815–1914* (Allen Lane, 2016)

### IN CONTEXT

Born in Alexandria in 1917, Eric Hobsbawm spent his youth in Vienna and Berlin, witnessing the rise of Nazism, before moving to Britain in 1933. He studied history at Cambridge and became a lecturer at Birkbeck in London. His books, notably *The Age Of...* series, which covered the years 1789–1991, were global bestsellers, making Hobsbawm one of the world's best-known and most influential historians. He was a lifelong communist, and his ideology infused his research and writing. Hobsbawm's other great love was the jazz scene, which he chronicled for the *New Statesman* under the pseudonym Francis Newton. He died in 2012 and his ashes were interred in Highgate Cemetery, close to the tomb of Karl Marx.

### Your book is titled *A Life in History*. How far did Hobsbawm's life shape the history that he produced?

One of the central arguments of my biography is that there is a dovetailing of Eric's personal life and the subjects he wrote about. For instance, in the 1940s, when he was a very committed communist in many ways, he wrote about the rise of organised labour in the industrial revolution. But in the mid-1950s, when he broke in all but name with the Communist party in Britain and started to move in the bohemian world of Soho, he became interested in writing about deviant and marginal people in history. It was no longer about the rise of the wage worker, but about millenarians and bandits – what he called 'primitive rebels'.

### Hobsbawm's communism was a huge part of who he was. When did this begin for him?

He was born in 1917 – coincidentally the year of the Russian Revolution – and grew up in Vienna. His parents died when he was quite young, so he was looked after by an uncle and aunt in Berlin. He was there in the early 1930s, when the Weimar republic was falling apart, and the choice in the high schools at that time was really between Nazism and communism. It was a much more extreme version of our own time, with the centre having fallen apart.

Eric couldn't possibly have become a Nazi. For one thing he was a British citizen, and

for another he was Jewish. So he gravitated towards the Communist party and, though he didn't actually join it until he was at Cambridge in 1936, he had become intellectually and ideologically a Marxist.

I always call him a communist with a small 'c' because, despite his ideological commitment, he never did the sort of things communists are supposed to do: only write for communist journals, sell the *Daily Worker* on the street corner, etc.

### Why did he decide to become a historian rather than pursuing a career in politics?

Eric proved to be very good at history in school and then read it at Cambridge from 1936–39. He got married during the war and felt that he needed to earn a living. So he got this job as a history lecturer at Birkbeck in London. Previously he'd thought of becoming a poet, but I've read some of his poems from during the war and they are truly terrible! He also applied to the BBC for a full-time job but they turned him down. He even considered working for the *Daily Mail*, but thought better of it.

Eric did think about working as a propagandist for the communists, but in the end he was unwilling to give up his independence of mind. So he plumped for history because he knew he was good at it and found it fascinating in many ways.

### In the book you describe how Hobsbawm was monitored by MI5. What was it about him that they deemed to be dangerous?

MI5 began to be interested in him during the war, when Eric served in the Army Education Corps. There, one of Eric's jobs was to put up wall newspapers to keep the troops informed. One of his superiors read the newspapers and felt they were too leftwing: in particular, they were arguing for a second front. (One of Stalin's demands was

that the western Allies should relieve the pressure on the Soviet armies by invading western Europe.) Eric's partisanship was felt to be inconvenient, and so he was reported to MI5 and they started their files on him. I think he suspected that somebody was spying on him, but he never really found out until a good deal later that it was MI5.

Once MI5 had him on their radar they didn't feel they should stop monitoring him, but he was pretty harmless really. And all the time Eric was being monitored, the Cambridge spies were literally getting away with murder. I think it's because Eric didn't seem quite British – he wasn't a classic English public schoolboy like the Cambridge spies were.

### What was it about Hobsbawm that made him a historian of note?

I think it was his ability to develop new concepts and methods, to pose big, challenging questions and to illustrate and explain them with all kinds of wonderful detail. One example of these concepts was the general crisis of the 17th century. In the 1950s, he argued that if you looked right across Europe, from the English Civil War to the Thirty Years' War, there was a general crisis of the feudal economy and society that caused massive disruptions and conflicts. This ignited a very long debate that is still rumbling on today.

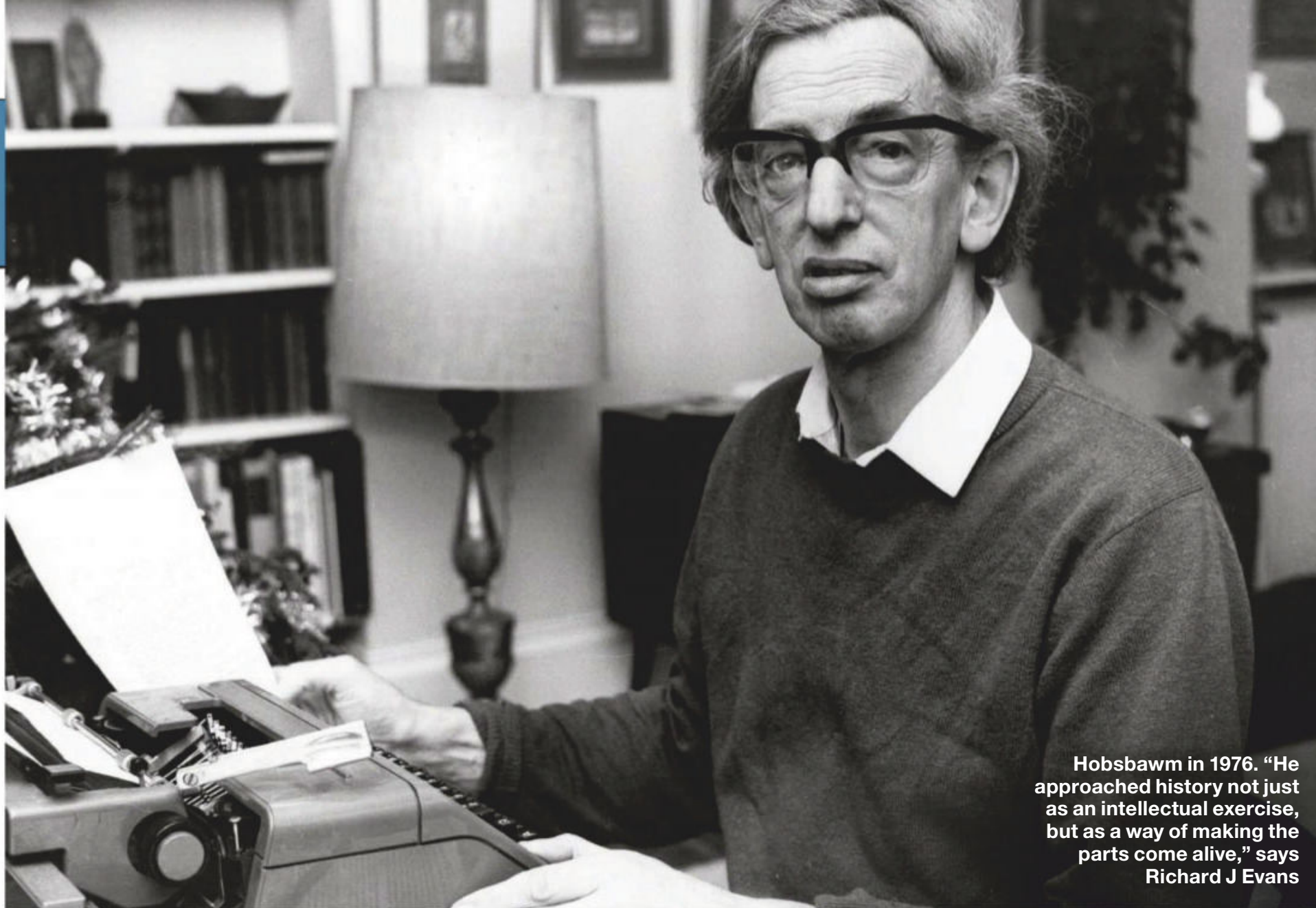
Another of these concepts was the invention of tradition: that traditions do not go back to time immemorial, but some are actually invented. Eric's interest in this was sparked by the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at Cambridge, which seemed traditional but was actually a very recent creation. In fact, we only just celebrated its 100th anniversary.

### Hobsbawm's books were extremely popular abroad, notably in Brazil. What do you think explains this?

I think it is because he had this British way with words. Eric approached history not just as an intellectual exercise but also as a way of making the parts come alive through literary style. And that's quite unusual outside the UK. We have this literary tradition of historical writing that goes back to Macaulay and Gibbon, and which has stood us in very good stead as British historians making an impact abroad.

*Eric was a very kind man. He wasn't a good hater, like many historians are*





Hobsbawm in 1976. "He approached history not just as an intellectual exercise, but as a way of making the parts come alive," says Richard J Evans

**Hobsbawm's success meant he was able to live a very comfortable life. How did he square that with the fact that he was a man of the left?**

As a child Eric went through periods of acute poverty. He recalled, for example, how in Vienna he had had to walk through the snow in a pair of old shoes that let the water in. And in Berlin, he had been so ashamed of his old second-hand bike that he would get to school early so he could hide it away. Eric was always very conscious of economic insecurity, even in old age when he was earning a lot of money from his books.

I don't think this was a question Eric asked himself very much. He avoided thinking about the fact he was a Marxist who was making hundreds of thousands from his books. *The Age of Extremes* sold 265,000 copies in Brazil alone, for example.

There's a nice quote I got from someone who knew Eric and was surprised at how comfortable and bourgeois his house was. She asked him how he squared it, and he said: "Well, if you're going down with the ship, you might as well go down first class!"

**Hobsbawm was often criticised for his communist beliefs. Was he blind to the worst excesses of communism in practice?**

Eric came to communism in Berlin, where it was a matter of life and death. Communism

was something that was part of his identity: he experienced the communist movement as a substitute family. There's a very interesting phone call recorded by MI5 in 1957, where the communists had started to threaten Eric with expulsion, and he kind of broke down and said: "Please, you can't do that" – even though at the time he was leading a campaign for the British Communist party leadership to reform themselves and admit that Stalinism was wrong.

There was a war within Eric between this small 'c' communist commitment and the recognition of the crimes of Stalin and Stalinism in particular. And I don't think this war was ever quite resolved. It's one of the fascinating things about *The Age of Extremes*, his history of the short 20th century. He's trying to come to terms with the evils of Stalinism, and it's quite difficult for someone who has been as committed as Eric has during his life.

**You met Hobsbawm on several occasions. What kind of man was he?**

I only knew him in his later years, through Birkbeck, where I taught from 1989–98. I always felt somewhat in awe of him, because he knew so much more than I did about anything we could talk about. But he was fascinating to talk to, and he knew so many people and had all kinds of views which were often quite surprising. He was

also a very kind man and, as far as I could see, entirely without malice. He never indulged in malicious gossip of the sort that's far too common in universities. He wasn't a good hater, like too many historians are. It's striking that everybody who knew him speaks very warmly about him.

**Is Hobsbawm still required reading for historians and students in the 21st century?**

It is remarkable that his books are all still in print. Walk into any university bookshop and you will see *The Age of Revolution* there on the history shelves. That was published in 1962. How many other historians' books from so long ago are still required reading on university history courses? I think the reason his books have lasted is because they have these challenging hypotheses that you can discuss in a seminar, but are beautifully written and carry the reader forward.

Eric still has a direct influence on

history students who read his work, and they should continue to do so. **H**



**Eric Hobsbawm: A Life in History** by Richard J Evans (Little, Brown, 800 pages, £35)



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Artemisia Gentileschi's *Self Portrait as a Lute-Player*. The 17th-century painter is one of several 'unquiet women' whose stories are shared in a new book



*Unquiet Women* seeks to redress this imbalance by gathering together a huge number of women's stories Adams has uncovered over the course of his historian's career. It is an eclectic and global mix, but the common thread is an "unquiet spirit of curiosity and creativity", a restlessness and refusal to accept fate that may not always be obtrusive but is certainly not quiet. From Trota of Salerno, a medieval medic who produced one of the first treatises to document cures for gynaecological issues, to Artemisia Gentileschi, an Italian artist who endured torture in order to bring her rapist to conviction (and then used her evocative work as a form of revenge), the pages of this collection are full of women who were not quiet in their own day, but whose stories have been gathering dust in the 21st century.

And while many of these stories are representative of women's experience in patriarchal societies, *Unquiet Women* is also careful to record more hopeful moments in history. One particularly grisly example relates to the establishment of women's rights in Ireland, with a document called the *Cáin Adomnáin*. This protected women from a variety of dangers – from their involvement in warfare to sexual harassment – and boasted an impressive list of witnesses.

According to legend, the document came about because Ronnat – the mother of a celebrated abbot, Adomnán, in the seventh century – tortured him for four years until he agreed to free women from their part in warfare and "the bondage of the cauldron". After eight months deprived of food, and three years imprisoned in a stone chest while worms devoured his tongue, Adomnán was released and created the *Cáin Adomnáin*, the first laws for

## Out of the shadows

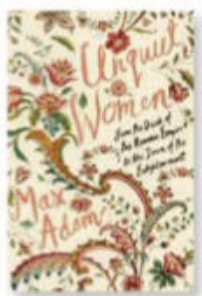
**HETTA HOWES** welcomes a centuries-spanning study that rescues women's lives from the margins of history



### **Unquiet Women: From the Dusk of the Roman Empire to the Dawn of the Enlightenment**

by Max Adams

Head of Zeus, 288 pages, £20



In Alan Bennett's popular play *The History Boys*, a teacher describes the effect of using compound adjectives in writing. Putting "un" in front of a noun or verb, he explains, creates a turn of phrase that brings with it "a sense of not sharing. Of being out of it [...] Not being in the

swim." It is exactly this sense of "being out of it" that Max Adams's latest book, *Unquiet Women*, confronts. The scarcity or marginalisation of women's stories in history is due, he suggests, not just to a paucity of material but to neglect. As the 18th-century author Mary Astell famously wrote: "Since the men being the historians, they seldom condescend to record the great and good actions of women." The stories are there to be found, Adams reminds us, but they are kept to one side – out of the swim – because they tend to complicate the sweeping narratives of grand change favoured by many male historians.

**The scarcity of women's stories is due not just to a paucity of material, but to neglect**





COMING SOON...

"Next issue, I will be speaking to medieval historian Catherine Hanley about Matilda, the 12th-century empress who battled her cousin for the English throne. Plus, we'll have historians' reviews of books on Wallis Simpson, Anglo-Saxon London, puritanism and ancient science."

Ellie Cawthorne, staff writer

women in his country. While Ronnat's dubious methods may be the stuff of myth and legend, the ancient document itself is testament to women's ceaseless efforts to make their voices heard.

Other stories in the collection have been slow to come to light, Adams suggests, because we haven't always looked for them in the right places. Throughout the book, careful attention is paid to the thread of women's textiles, whether it forms the cloth produced in domestic or professional labour, or is carefully employed for artistic expression.

One example relates to the Andalusian poet Wallada Bint-al-Mustakfi who refused marriage, refused the prescribed veil, and refused to keep her affairs with

## Some women were telling their stories with loom and needle rather than pen and paper

both men and women quiet. Her response to critics was embroidered on her robe, which announced that she was "going her way, with pride". Meanwhile, the silk shroud in which a young woman in her twenties was found buried in Spitalfields market gives us insight into her status: silk was not easily available in Britain 1,700 years ago, when London was the Roman Londinium. While Christine de Pizan and Margery Kempe were recording their experiences in the vellum of manuscripts, other women were telling their stories with loom and needle rather than pen and paper.

The beautiful, faux-embroidered cover of *Unquiet Women* not only makes it an attractive addition to any bookshelf; it also serves as a reminder that, if we pay as much attention to cloth as to the written word, we can continue to unravel stories of unquiet women throughout history. **H**

Hetta Howes is a BBC New Generation Thinker and a lecturer in medieval literature at City, University of London

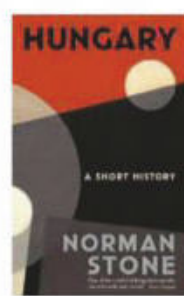
# Revolution and repression

**MARTYN RADY** admires the smartly written story of a nation that has veered from freedom-fighting to corrupt dictatorships

## Hungary: A Short History

by Norman Stone

Profile Books, 288 pages, £16.99



Back in the 15th century, one king of Hungary offended his foreign guests by serving them over-seasoned food. And over the years, Hungary itself has presented something of an acquired taste.

There have been long periods when it was thought highly palatable. In the aftermath of Hungary's failed 1848–49 War of Independence against the Habsburgs, the exiled revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth was feted by British and US audiences, while his Austrian adversary, General Haynau, was chased by draymen down Southwark's Borough High Street. In the late 19th century, Hungary did a plausible impression of constitutional government with a parliament building that even looked like the Palace of Westminster (with the dome of St Paul's on top). Then, in October 1956, its freedom fighters set a new standard of courage and exposed the harshness of communist rule. In the months afterwards, the British Communist party lost a third of its members.

But between these times, the flavour has been more pungent. At the start of the last century, western visitors discovered that, beneath its liberal facade, the Hungarian government was behaving in a savage fashion towards its national minorities. In 1914 and 1940, the country lined up with Germany, and during the Holocaust participated in the murder of Jews. Then, in defeat, Hungary's

politicians kowtowed to Moscow, with their leader becoming 'Stalin's most loyal pupil'. Now, Hungary is fast becoming a byword for dictatorship, covert antisemitism and industrial-scale corruption.

Norman Stone's history of Hungary fizzles with narrative elan and startling anecdotes: that the Austro-Hungarian emperor Franz Joseph brought his own bottled water when visiting Budapest; that during the great inflation of 1946, 3 trillion pengő bought only a chicken, a bottle of olive oil and a few vegetables. The emphasis is firmly on the modern period; even so, the 20 pages that take the reader from the Middle Ages to 1848 are full of insights.

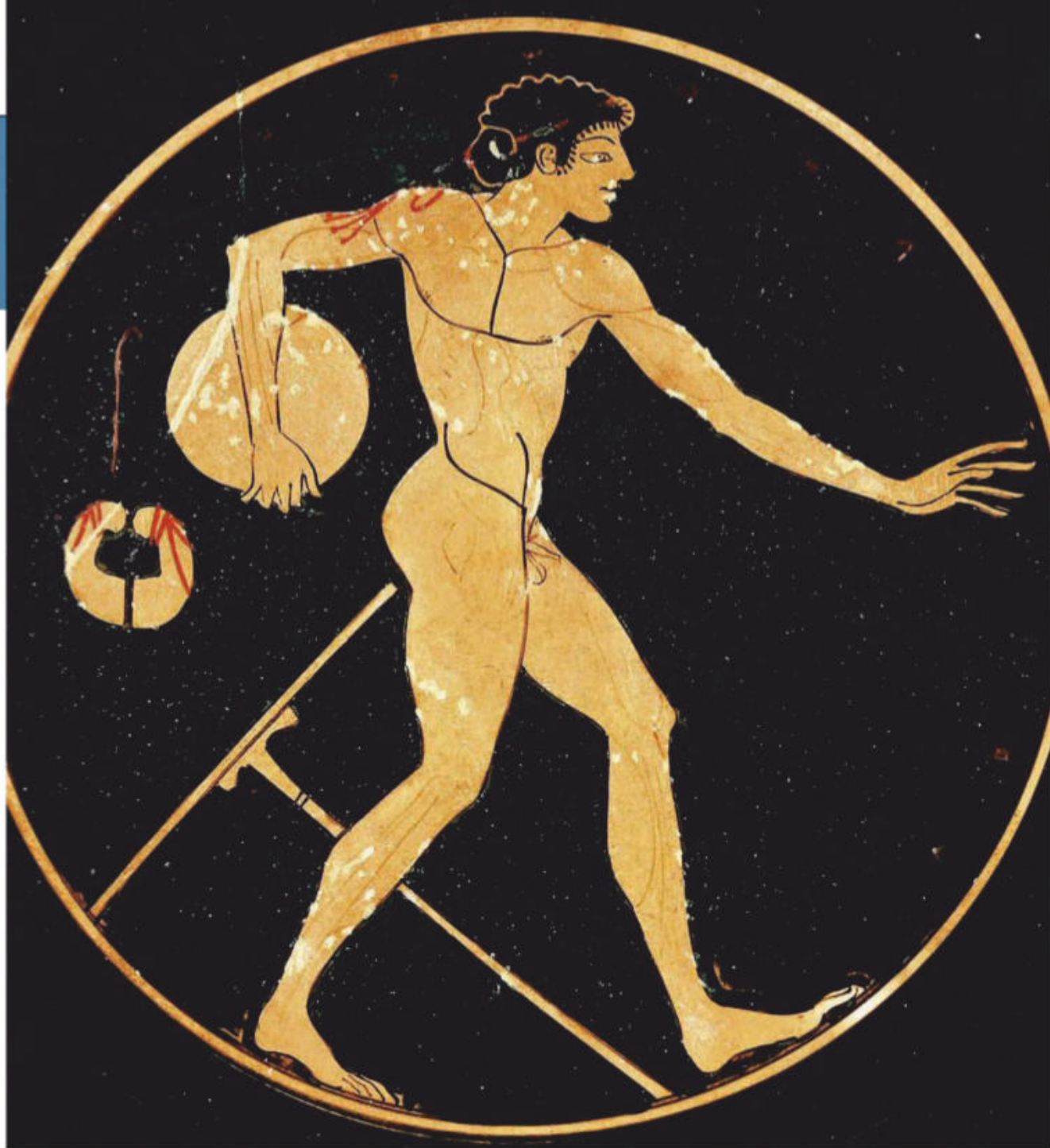
But historians of Hungary all too often lose their taste buds. Picking up the title of Bryan Cartledge's history of Hungary, *The Will to Survive*, Stone ventures that "Hungary's survival is indeed strange". Nobody has ever sought to kill off the Hungarians or their language, though, and Hungary is still halfway up the EU list of countries ranked by population size. He dismisses the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, which reduced Hungary's land mass by more than two-thirds, as "immoral". In fact, the peacemakers did a fairly good job of squaring territory with nationality and state viability. Finally, Stone resurrects the old idea that Hungarian is a Turkish language and unrelated to Finnish. This is a linguistic canard now being promoted by the Hungarian government. Its inclusion in this otherwise masterly survey leaves a strange taste in the mouth. **H**

Martyn Rady is professor of central European history at UCL, and author of *Customary Law in Hungary* (OUP, 2015)

Crowds on a Soviet tank during the 1956 Hungarian revolution







A fifth-century BC piece of Greek pottery shows a discus-thrower in action. The kudos attached to winning ancient Olympic events “was enormous and lucrative”, says Peter Jones

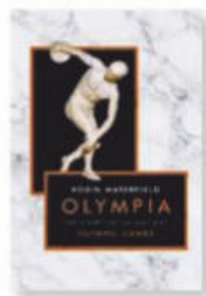
## Ancient athletes

**PETER JONES** enjoys a readable account of the classical Olympics – featuring gods, glory and an emperor who won every event

### Olympia: The Story of the Ancient Olympic Games

by Robin Waterfield

Head of Zeus, 224 pages, £18.99



The Olympic story has been told many times, but archaeological finds and literary interpretation do not stand still. In this new book, classical translator and historian Robin

Waterfield makes fine use of both.

Held in honour of Zeus, god of Olympus, the games were staged every four years in Elis, a backwater of the Peloponnese 120 miles from the mountain itself. Greeks dated the first games to 776 BC, but one can rarely trust such confident assertions. Here, however, Waterfield shows that 776 BC looks

about right: huge bronze tripods (often used as prizes) are found there from that period, while there is evidence that wells were dug, a nearby hill was terraced for spectators and a river was diverted away from the site at around this time.

The games – imitations of which spread all over the Greek world – were eagerly taken up by the Romans. Nero competed and naturally was agreed to have won everything (his triumphs were expunged when he killed himself in AD 68). The games were finally brought to an end in AD 393 by the Christian Roman emperor Theodosius.

In 1766, the site was rediscovered by

**Only winning counted  
– the gods did not  
support losers**

the Englishman Richard Chandler, and the French began excavations there in 1829. In 1896, the French historian Pierre de Coubertin, inspired by the ancient example, staged the first modern Olympics. It’s worth noting that the later incarnation bears little relation to the original – especially not the Nazi-inspired global torch relay that precedes the Games. Waterfield surprisingly contends that the modern marathon (absent from the ancient Olympics) was “not invented in commemoration of a feat of an ancient runner”. He surely meant that the modern marathon was based on an ancient story – of a Greek running from Marathon to Athens to announce victory over the Persians in 490 BC – that may not be true.

The author rightly emphasises that the vastly popular games were a religious event: Olympia was first and foremost a walled sanctuary (the Altis) in honour of Zeus, with a stadium attached to it. The Altis was dominated by its huge temple, housing the famous gold and ivory statue of Zeus (one of the wonders of the ancient world), surrounded by statues erected by athletes in thanks for victories, as well as gymnasia, baths and hotels.

The Greek epic poet Homer depicted the gods enjoying watching men in conflict, especially in the gods’ honour, and Olympia presented the supreme challenge to those competing. Athletes did not compete in teams: it was all about the individual, with no prizes for runners-up. Only winning counted – the gods did not support losers. It was even possible to carry off a prize without competing – especially in contact sports – if other entrants turned up, didn’t fancy their chances and quietly slipped away. The kudos attached to winning, both for athlete and home town, was enormous (and lucrative), so much so that competing extended well beyond the leisured aristocratic classes.

Waterfield has written a clear, well-organised, information-packed and very readable account of this influential ancient Greek invention. Highly recommended. **H**

Peter Jones’s latest book is *Memento Mori* (Atlantic, 2018)



Calouste Gulbenkian photographed with his son in around 1925. The oil magnate known as 'Mr Five Per Cent' is the subject of a new biography

## Striking it rich

**BÜLENT GÖKAY** *applauds a lovingly crafted life of an oil baron whose restless business manoeuvres shaped our modern world*

### Mr Five Per Cent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the World's Richest Man

By Jonathan Conlin

Profile Books, 416 pages, £25



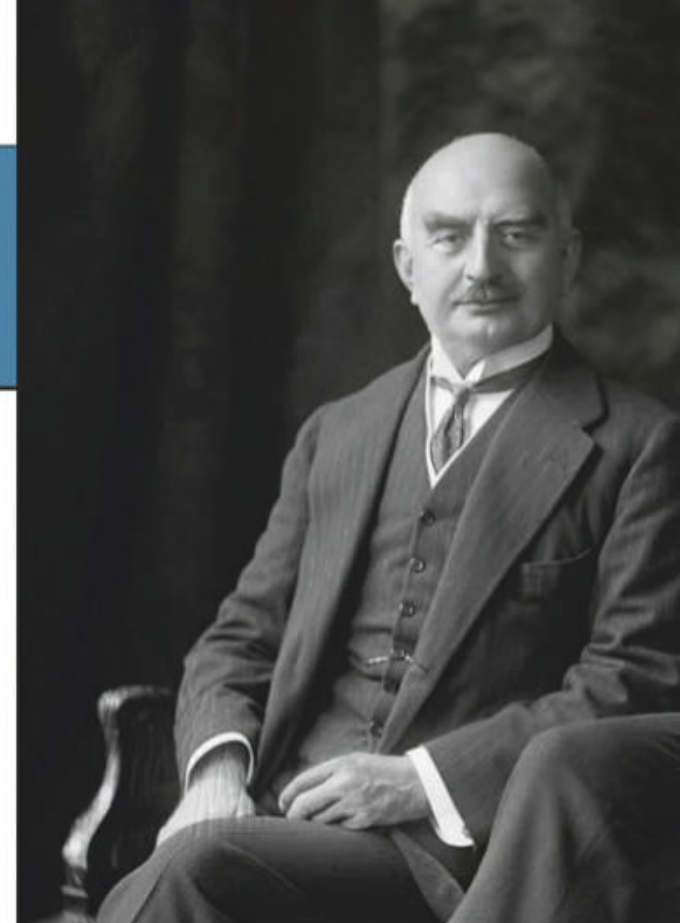
Calouste Gulbenkian was an Anglo-Armenian oil magnate and the guardian of a historic collection of art, antiquities and sculpture – the largest collection of art ever owned by one person. Gulbenkian helped establish the oil majors we know today as Royal Dutch Shell and Total, and personally owned 5 per cent of Middle East oil production – hence his nickname: 'Mr Five Per Cent'. Taking this memorable moniker as its title, this new volume from Jonathan Conlin – a cultural historian at Southampton University – re-examines Gulbenkian's complex private and public life.

Published on the 150th anniversary of the oil magnate's birth, Conlin's

biography is a business history that not only strips away many obscure myths surrounding this enigmatic figure, but also explains in a clear and scholarly way how this business architect shaped our modern hydrocarbon economy.

Gulbenkian was born in the capital of the Ottoman empire, Constantinople, in 1869. His father was an oil importer/exporter who sent him to study petroleum engineering at King's College London. In 1889, he visited Russia to examine the oil industry at Baku before fleeing to Egypt in 1896 in the aftermath of the Hamidian massacres (of Armenians in the Ottoman empire). It was in Cairo that Gulbenkian forged influential business contacts with the Armenian oil magnate Alexander Mantashev and banking heir Sir Evelyn Baring. In 1902,

**Many obscure myths surround this enigmatic figure**



Gulbenkian became a naturalised British citizen and five years later was involved in the merger that resulted in the creation of Royal Dutch/Shell, of which he was a major shareholder.

In 1911, he was the driving force behind the creation of the Turkish Petroleum Company, a consortium of the largest European oil companies aimed at cooperatively securing exploration and development rights in Iraq, then under Ottoman rule. Gulbenkian put together the oil alliance between the British, Dutch, German and Ottoman empires, managing to hold it together through two world wars. After dividing his time between London and Paris, in 1942 he relocated to Lisbon, capital of neutral Portugal,

## Ghosts in the trenches

**CATRIONA PENNELL** *commends a rich survey of magic, prophecy and superstitious beliefs amid the horrors of the First World War*

### A Supernatural War: Magic, Divination and Faith During the First World War

by Owen Davies

Oxford University Press, 304 pages, £20



In his 1929 play *But It Still Goes On*, Robert Graves – a veteran of the First World War – writes: “High-explosive barrages will make a temporary liar or visionary of anyone.”

Such mistruths or apparitions, conjured amid the horror of war, could easily be

dismissed by the historian as falsity and fantasy, irrelevant compared with the rigour of verifiable evidence securely stored in the archive. But as Owen Davies, an expert in witchcraft, magic and ghosts, highlights in his new book, that would leave our understanding of the sociocultural fabric of the First World War all the poorer. For “whatever the spurious or mundane origins of wartime visions, spirits and psychical experiences”, however “bizarre or fantastical”, they tell us much about both perceptions of the war and perceptions of the supernatural in

the first half of the 20th century.

In what reads as a compact and succinct volume despite its 300-page length, Davies explores a breadth of divination practices of the time, including prophecies, visions, fortune telling, psychical warfare, lucky charms and faith. His concern is not to ridicule the subject matter – as highlighted by a sensitive critique of the term ‘superstition’ early on – but to explore the myriad ways a violent collective crisis like the First World War can push even the most rational of beings to transcend reason. His expertise as a scholar of magic from the ancient world to the modern age ensures that the beliefs, practices and opinions regarding the supernatural that emerge during the war are properly contextualised. Davies also draws on

ALAMY





where he lived until his death in 1955.

Calouste Gulbenkian is a compelling but also demanding subject, his life an interesting and widely discussed topic. Conlin's book, lovingly researched and crafted with skill, constitutes the most recent interpretation, from which I learned a lot. This book pulls off a double success: academic researchers will enjoy and be inspired by it, while general readers will appreciate its clarity and concision. While there are other books written about the extraordinary life of Calouste Gulbenkian, none come close to matching this volume. **H**

**Bülent Gökay** is professor of international relations at Keele University and the editor of *The Politics of Oil: A Survey* (Routledge, 2006)

an impressively wide evidence-base, both in terms of sources – incorporating soldiers' letters, memoirs, newspaper articles, oral histories, images and objects – and non-English coverage, with material from across the UK, throughout Europe and beyond.

This is a rich and thought-provoking study of how the First World War ensured the widespread continuation of a popular belief in magic – even in the 'modernity' of the post-1914 age – and why this is important to our understanding of life during and after the conflict. **H**

**Catriona Pennell** is associate professor of history at the University of Exeter, and co-editor, with Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, of *A World At War, 1911-1949: Explorations in the Cultural History of War* (Brill, 2019)

BRIDGEMAN

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For interviews with authors of the latest books, including some reviewed here, check out our twice-weekly podcast at [historyextra.com/podcasts](http://historyextra.com/podcasts)



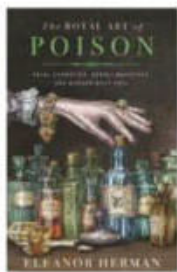
## Vial deeds

**TRACY BORMAN** is enthralled by a dark journey through the history of poisoning in Europe's royal courts

### The Royal Art of Poison: Fatal Cosmetics, Deadly Medicines and Murder Most Foul

by Eleanor Herman

Duckworth, 320 pages, £14.99



In July 1553, a 15-year-old boy lay dying at Greenwich. His emaciated body was covered with scabs and sores, his hair had fallen out in clumps and his fingernails and toenails had turned black. Barely able to breathe, he coughed up mucus that one eyewitness described as "sometimes coloured a greenish yellow and black, sometimes pink, like the colour of blood". When the poor wretch died on the sixth of that month, the London clothier Henry Machyn noted that he "was poisoned, as everybody says". The boy was Edward VI, king of England.

The agonising death of Henry VIII's "precious jewel" had all the hallmarks of a classic poisoning case. He had been racked by pain and vomited frequently. Little wonder that many of his subjects suspected foul play. In fact, Edward almost certainly had tuberculosis, a disease that was rampant at the time.

Rumours of poison often attended a royal death, particularly one involving someone so young. As Eleanor Herman proves in this fascinating book, many other high-profile figures were thought to have met their ends as a result of a toxic substance administered by sleight of hand. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that enormous trouble was taken to test anything that touched the royal lips – or posterior. Servants tasted their masters' food, tried on their undergarments and even

tested their chamber pots.

It is ironic that, in a society obsessed with the idea of poison, many people imbibed it with unknowing alacrity in the form of medicine, cosmetics and living conditions. Elizabeth I liberally plastered her face, neck and hands with white lead every day in order to attain the ethereal, pale-faced beauty that was favoured at the time. Many other women followed suit, while men smeared faeces on their bald spots. Some of the most lethal potions were administered by physicians and apothecaries: arsenic skin cream, mercury enemas and drinks of lead filings.

The author's fascination with the subject is infectious. Her painstaking research has included scientific papers on the exhumation of royal bodies, a plethora of Renaissance beauty bibles and even accounts of 16th-century autopsies and embalming. With barely concealed relish, she takes the reader on a darkly absorbing journey through the princely courts of Europe, tracing the history of poisoning – both deliberate and accidental.

The first part of the book considers the various forms of poison and their perceived antidotes and detectors, including diamonds and unicorn horns. Herman then applies modern scientific analysis to a host of royal poisoning cases, which reads like a who's who of medieval and early modern Europe: from Ivan the Terrible to Mozart and Napoleon. Perhaps most disturbing, though, is the final part of the book, which brings the story right up to date by exploring how poison is still used as a tool for political assassination.

Endlessly fascinating and beautifully crafted, this is not a book for the faint of heart – or stomach. **H**

**Elizabeth I, depicted in old age, smeared her face in toxic lead-based cosmetics**

**Tracy Borman's latest book is *Henry VIII and the Men Who Made Him* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2018)**







A contemporary woodcut of the 1781 *Zong* massacre. A new novel contains parallels to the atrocity, when African captives were thrown from a slave ship

## FICTION

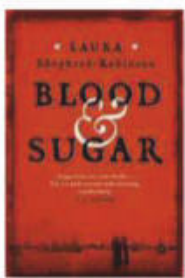
# Trade secrets

**NICK RENNISON** enjoys an intricately plotted murder mystery set during the campaign to abolish slavery

### Blood & Sugar

by Laura Shepherd-Robinson

Mantle, 448 pages, £14.99



In the early hours of a midsummer morning in June 1781, the body of a man is found hanging from a pole in Deptford Dockyard. He is naked and bears the marks of torture. His throat has

been cut and, although he is white, he has been branded as if he were a black slave. The murder victim is identified as Thaddeus Archer, a barrister and a dedicated campaigner for the abolition of slavery. Captain Harry Corsham, Archer's old friend from his days at Oxford, travels to Deptford to discover what happened.

The narrator of this accomplished debut novel, Harry is a heroic veteran of Britain's war against its rebellious American colonies. He has witnessed terrible things, but nothing prepares him for what he unearths as he investigates the murder. Archer, it emerges, came to

Deptford on the trail of a story he believed would destroy the slave trade for ever: he'd heard rumours of a voyage during which hundreds of slaves were cold-bloodedly thrown into the ocean to drown. News of this atrocity, he hoped, would alter public perceptions of slavery. (The massacre in Shepherd-Robinson's book is invented, but echoes the real-life mass killing on the British slave ship the *Zong* in 1781.) Has the lawyer been slain to keep him silent? Or are there more personal motives for his murder?

As Harry plunges ever further into the brutal world his friend wanted to expose, his own life is placed in danger. The tentacles of the slave trade reach into the very heart of the British establishment, and there are people who will stop at nothing to keep its secrets hidden.

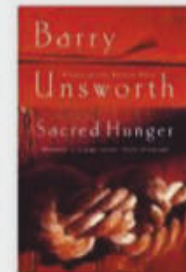
Both an intricately plotted murder mystery and a vivid evocation of the darker side of 18th-century life, *Blood & Sugar* is a powerful, thoroughly absorbing thriller. **H**

**Nick Rennison** is the author of *Carver's Truth* (Corvus, 2016)

## THREE MORE NOVELS ON BRITISH SLAVE TRADING

### Sacred Hunger

Barry Unsworth (1992)

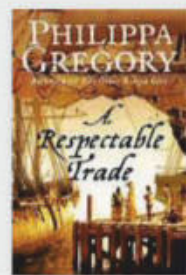


Joint winner of the 1992 Booker prize, this sprawling saga of the slave trade has the confrontation of two men at its heart. Erasmus Kemp strives for

wealth and position through the traffic in human beings. His cousin Matthew Paris is a physician forced to witness the horrors of the middle passage first-hand. Unsworth provides a sophisticated, moving investigation of greed, power and the terrible relationship of oppressor and oppressed.

### A Respectable Trade

Philippa Gregory (1995)

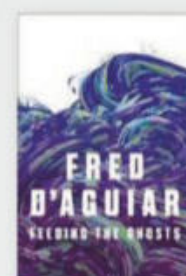


Set in Bristol in the 1780s, Philippa Gregory's cleverly told story recounts an impossible love affair. Frances Cole is the wife of an ambitious small-time slave

trader, while Mehuru is a high-status nobleman in his native Africa, who has been captured and made her husband's property. Avoiding potential pitfalls of sentimentality, Gregory creates a convincing portrait of a society built on inhumanity, and of two people struggling desperately to escape its chains.

### Feeding the Ghosts

Fred D'Aguiar (1997)



Inspired by the true story of the *Zong*, the 18th-century ship from which 131 sick enslaved men, women and children were thrown into the sea, this novel

is a haunting tale of the cruelty of the trade in human lives. Mintah, an African woman who survives the atrocity and works to bring its perpetrators to some kind of justice, is a remarkable creation, and D'Aguiar tells her tale in spare but lyrical prose.





Patty Hearst was kidnapped by SLA activists before joining the group

Jonathan Wright previews the pick of upcoming programmes

# TV & RADIO



## Making mayhem

### The Radical Story of Patty Hearst

TV PBS America

Scheduled for Saturday 2 February

It's 45 years since members of the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), a radical leftwing group, kidnapped 19-year-old US heiress Patty Hearst. After two months in captivity, Hearst announced she had joined the group, and was filmed wielding an M1 carbine during a bank robbery. Later, she would claim she'd been brainwashed and would be pardoned by Bill Clinton. This acclaimed six-part series traces her story along with that of the SLA – many of whom, like Hearst, came from privileged backgrounds.



Newt Gingrich led the Republicans to a pivotal midterm success in 1994

## Divided house

### Archive on 4: American Incivility: Year Zero

Radio Radio 4

Scheduled for Saturday 2 February

Can democratic government function without legislators observing some standards of decorum? Will democracy survive if people can't agree to disagree? Judging by US politics, says journalist Michael Goldfarb, the answer is no.

So how did this come to pass? Goldfarb traces the answer to the 1994 midterm election, when Newt Gingrich led the Republicans to a majority in the House of Representatives. In Goldfarb's view, US politics went from being about the art of the possible to something closer to Hobbes' vision of "the war of all against all".

## Identity crisis

A new BBC series explores the wider story of the 1989 Satanic Verses controversy

### Fatwa

RADIO Radio 4

Weekdays from Monday 4 February

On 14 February 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa calling for the death of Salman Rushdie and his publishers. But why did Iran's ailing supreme leader target the author of *The Satanic Verses*? And what were the consequences in Britain and the wider world?

These are the questions addressed by a new series which, rather than focusing on Rushdie's own personal ordeal, looks at the wider story over two decades. "We're trying to create a sense of the context in which the fatwa happened," explains executive producer Richard Knight.

The series – which is produced by Chloe Hadjimatheou and gathers together first-hand testimony from, among others, book-burners, activists of different stripes and academics – begins not in the late 1980s, but in 1979. This was the year the shah of Iran's government was toppled, a year chosen to help "understand the nature of the regime from which the fatwa emerged".

More central to the series, though, is the story of Britain's Muslim community in the 1980s – of life in a place

where overt racism was far more commonplace than today, and where many white Britons were at best dimly aware of how communities with roots abroad saw themselves. The series makes the point that 1989 changed this.

"For [immigrant communities], 1989 was a moment when a kind of definition happened," says Knight. "On all sides, people were struggling to find, project, communicate and understand their identities – or the identities of others – and that was thrown into sharp relief." Yet the fatwa forced people to choose sides. "You had to decide where you stood," says Knight.

Carrying the story forward to 1999, the series also looks at the consequences of the event. We hear from those who were drawn towards jihad, and voices from the nationalist right who sought to play on the fears the fatwa brought to the surface. The subject of self-censorship, because of the danger of inspiring "a violent, aggressive response", also features prominently.

"There were implications for everyone, some of which are subtle and some of which are more obvious," says Knight. "We're trying to understand what those consequences may have been." **B**

**"It was a moment when definition happened. You had to decide where you stood"**



Muslims in Bradford burn copies of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses*





Poet Sue Brown interviews Earl Crook for 'The First Black Brummies', one of four documentaries tracing minority communities' impact on Britain

## Cultural exchanges

### A Very British History

TV BBC Four

scheduled for February

Britain's cultural story through the 20th century was one where different minority communities exerted a huge influence, as the four documentaries in *A Very British History* (first shown in different BBC regions in December) explore. Each looks at a specific group and is presented by someone with strong roots in that community.

For 'The First Black Brummies', poet Sue Brown tells the story of those who came from the Caribbean after the

Second World War and through to the 1970s, many thinking they would stay for just a few years. Instead, they built new lives and settled, as Brown charts by looking at her own family's story in the Midlands.

In 'The Jews in Leeds', filmmaker Simon Glass charts the lives of those who fled the pogroms of eastern Europe for, initially, the ports of Hull and Grimsby. Meanwhile, 'Romany Gypsies' finds writer Damian Le Bas exploring how nomadic people in the 1960s were forced to adopt a more settled existence.

**For more on the fourth episode, about Ugandan Asians, turn to page 50**

"Destiny is all..."

### The Last Kingdom, Season Three

DVD (Universal Pictures, £17.99, cert 18)

After partnering with the BBC for the second series, Netflix has now taken over as the sole company producing *The Last Kingdom*, based on Bernard Cornwell's 'Saxon Stories' sequence of novels. It shows. Although earlier series didn't exactly shy from showing blood and gore, season three of the drama is visceral and violent.

It's to be hoped this doesn't limit its audience too much because it remains terrifically entertaining. At its heart lies Uhtred of Bebbanburg



Visceral and violent: *The Last Kingdom* has lost none of its bite

(Alexander Dreymon), a Saxon raised as a Dane, who is serving his frenemy, King Alfred of Wessex (David Dawson).

However, Alfred is dying and, following an argument, Uhtred becomes an outlaw at the moment when Wessex, threatened by a Danish invasion, needs him most. Moreover, Alfred's callow son, Prince Edward (Timothy Innes), badly needs Uhtred by his side if he's to unite England.

Those who react with rolled eyes to muddy vistas, cod mysticism and becostumed actors doing serious faces should probably turn away now. But for anyone who's invested time in the first two series, we can report *The Last Kingdom* has lost none of its bite.

## ALSO LOOK OUT FOR...

FIND WEEKLY TV & RADIO UPDATES AT [historyextra.com/topic/tv-and-radio](http://historyextra.com/topic/tv-and-radio)



Carving out a dynasty: Mamluk soldiers shown in c1350 metalwork

They may get less attention than the pharaohs, but from the 13th–16th centuries, the Mamluks ruled Egypt and built a great civilisation, albeit one where slavery was a mundane fact of day-to-day life. **Tumanby** (Radio 4) is an epic drama that traces life under the dynasty, and returns for a new eight-part series on Monday 4 February.

Also listen out for **Book of the Week - Threads of Life: A History of the World Through the Eye of a Needle** (Radio 4, weekdays from Monday 4 February), in which curator and textile artist Clare Hunter uncovers stories of women and men who have, down the centuries, used sewing to tell their stories. Meanwhile, **From Sensuality to Puritanism** (Radio 4, February) is the story of how the nature of Islam has changed down the years.

BBC Radio Scotland carries plenty of history programming that's available via the new BBC Sounds app for those who don't live north of the border. **Chanel's Scottish Love Affair** (Thursday 14 February) focuses on Rosehall House, a fishing lodge where the designer conducted an affair with Hugh 'Bendor' Grosvenor, the Duke of Westminster. In **Best Friends Forever: Robert Burns and Mrs Dunlop** (Friday 25 January), novelist Louise Welsh explores a friendship that transcended barriers of age, sex and class.

**Last B-24** (PBS America, Wednesday 13 February) charts an expedition to recover the bodies of three airmen, lost in 1944, from a Liberator bomber that crashed in the sea off Croatia.



# **BBC** MUSIC MAGAZINE AWARDS 2019



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\*Calls costs 7p per minute plus networks extras



# Kings and Queens

## St Anne's College, Oxford 2-3 March 2019

Discover the fascinating history of some of Britain's most intriguing monarchs over two days of talks by expert historians. There are six lectures on the Saturday and five on the Sunday. Both days also include book signings, a buffet lunch and refreshments.

### Ticket prices:

Subscribers to  
*BBC History Magazine*★

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**for a day ticket**

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**TERMS AND CONDITIONS** We reserve the right to replace any speaker with an alternative of equal stature in the unlikely event that they are unable to attend. Please let us know when booking of any special access requirements. Tickets are non-refundable and places are limited. There will be a transaction fee of £2.50 for postal tickets. There will be no transaction fee for e-tickets.



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For full details, and to book tickets online, go to  
**historyextra.com/events** or call **0871 231 0847\*\***

\*\*Calls cost 13p  
per minute plus  
your network's  
access charge



# Weekend

**BBC**  
**HiSTORY**  
MAGAZINE

## Saturday 2 March

Robert  
Hutchinson

### Henry VIII: The Decline and Fall of a Tyrant



**Saturday**  
10.15–11.15

Henry VIII has been defined more by his six marriages than

who he truly was. In this talk, author and historian Robert Hutchinson will focus on the epic tragedy of the Tudor monarch's last seven years, revealing a lonely, vulnerable king, thwarted in his ambitions.

Catherine  
Hanley

### Matilda: The Greatest King England Never Had



**Saturday**  
11.45–12.45

When Henry I died in 1135, he left the English crown to his eldest

legitimate child. It should have been the easiest succession imaginable, but it wasn't – because Henry's heir was not a son but a daughter. In her talk, medieval historian Catherine Hanley will introduce Matilda and examine her campaign to claim the throne.

Laura  
Ashe

### Richard II: The Boy Who Never Grew Up



**Saturday**  
13.45–14.45

Richard II came to the throne as a child and the chaotic events

of his faltering reign expose his own personal weaknesses, and the profound difficulties thrown up by government shaped around personalities. In her talk, Professor Laura Ashe will revisit the turbulent years of the late 14th century.

Miles  
Taylor

### Victoria, Queen of England, and Empress of India



**Saturday**  
15.15–16.15

As Empress of India, Queen Victoria was never a token ruler and

Indian politics and society were fundamentally reshaped by her influence from afar. In this illustrated lecture, Professor Miles Taylor will talk about the significant impact India had on the queen as well as the pivotal role she played in India.

Susan  
Doran

### Did Elizabeth's Gender Really Matter?



**Saturday**  
16.45–17.45

In her talk on the iconic Tudor queen, Professor Susan Doran

will explore how attitudes towards Elizabeth's gender changed over the 20th century. She also asks, how much did the fact that Elizabeth was a queen, and not a king, really affect her reign?

Nathen  
Amin

### Henry VII and the Pretenders to the Tudor Crown



**Saturday**  
18.30–19.30

For the first decade of his reign, Henry VII was plagued by a

pair of pretenders who sought to seize his hard-won crown: Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck. In this talk, author and historian Nathen Amin examines how Henry faced down these threats and established the Tudor dynasty.

## Sunday 3 March

Anne  
Curry

### Henry V: A Life of Transformations



**Sunday**  
10.15–11.15

It's easy to dismiss Henry V as a warrior king who had the

misfortune to die young. But he was a truly complex person, who transformed himself from a wayward prince into a serious-minded if not obsessive king. In her talk, Professor Anne Curry will delve into this transformation and how it shaped Henry's kingship and his wars.

Clare  
Jackson

### Charles II, Scotland and Newmarket



**Sunday**  
11.45–12.45

Clare Jackson, author of the Penguin Monarchs biography of

Charles II, chronicles the Merrie Monarch's rollercoaster of a life – from his flight from parliamentary forces to his triumphant Restoration. She also considers the difficulties she encountered writing a new life of this colourful king.

Piers  
Brendon

### Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King



**Sunday**  
13.45–14.45

Edward VIII biographer Piers Brendon will trace the king's

tumultuous private and public life, from playboy prince to troubled sovereign. He will focus especially on the abdication crisis (including Edward's relationship with Winston Churchill) and estimate its impact on the institution of monarchy in the 20th century.

Michael  
Penman

### Robert Bruce of Scotland: Myth and Aftermyth



**Sunday**  
15.15–16.15

Dr Michael Penman avoids the familiar narrative of Robert

Bruce's life. Instead, he considers whether the story of the Scottish king's military triumphs over the English was a heroic past created by Bruce himself – as well as by generations of Scots.

Tom  
Holland

### Æthelstan: The Founding Father of England



**Sunday**  
16.45–17.45

There was nothing inevitable about the emergence of England as a

unitary kingdom. The achievements of Æthelstan as conqueror, legislator and patron of learning laid foundations that today the English tend to take for granted. Popular historian Tom Holland will tell a thrilling and remarkable story that deserves to be much better known.

**Join us  
for a  
weekend in  
Oxford**



## HISTORY EXPLORER

### The story of the Bloomsbury set

Nige Tassell and Maggie Humm explore **Charleston** in East Sussex, the rural retreat that recharged some of the keenest minds of the early 20th century

It's difficult, on a brilliantly sunny day, to see Charleston as anything other than an idyllic, peaceful retreat from city life. Nestled among the South Downs, a handful of miles from the English Channel, the former farmhouse and its modest rounds are an open invitation to recharge and reflect. And this is exactly what it offered the Bloomsbury set during the first half of the 20th century.

As its name suggests, the Bloomsbury set was founded in Bloomsbury, in central London, in around 1904. 'Founded' would be overstating it, for this gathering of intellectuals was distinctly loose and unstructured. Their radical thinking – about literature, art, culture, politics, sexuality and domestic life – set them apart in Edwardian society. Collectively, they represented a minor counter-culture, albeit one rather well heeled and certainly well connected. Their number included

artists, writers, publishers and even the senior adviser to the chancellor of the Exchequer.

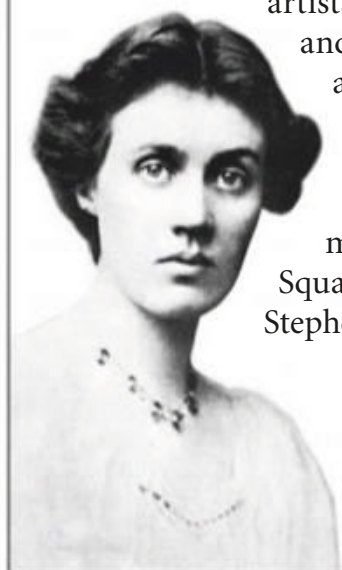
They originally met at 46 Gordon Square, the house of the Stephen family, which

included the sisters Vanessa and Virginia (the future Virginia Woolf). After their strict Edwardian father passed away in 1904, the sisters' lives took another course, infiltrated by some of the keenest minds of a generation. The shackles of respectable upper-middle-class life had been lifted, allowing the women to blossom intellectually. "We did not hesitate to talk of anything," Vanessa later observed of those Gordon Square gatherings. "You could say what you liked about art, sex and religion."

#### Countryside idyll

In 1907, Vanessa married the art critic Clive Bell with whom she had two sons, but the couple had separated by the time the First World War broke out. Her sister Virginia, by now married to the publisher Leonard Woolf, suggested that Vanessa and the boys escape the danger of wartime London by moving to the tranquillity of East Sussex, where she and Leonard had made their home. It was Virginia who discovered Charleston, the house that would become Vanessa's – and, by extension, the Bloomsbury set's – rural retreat.

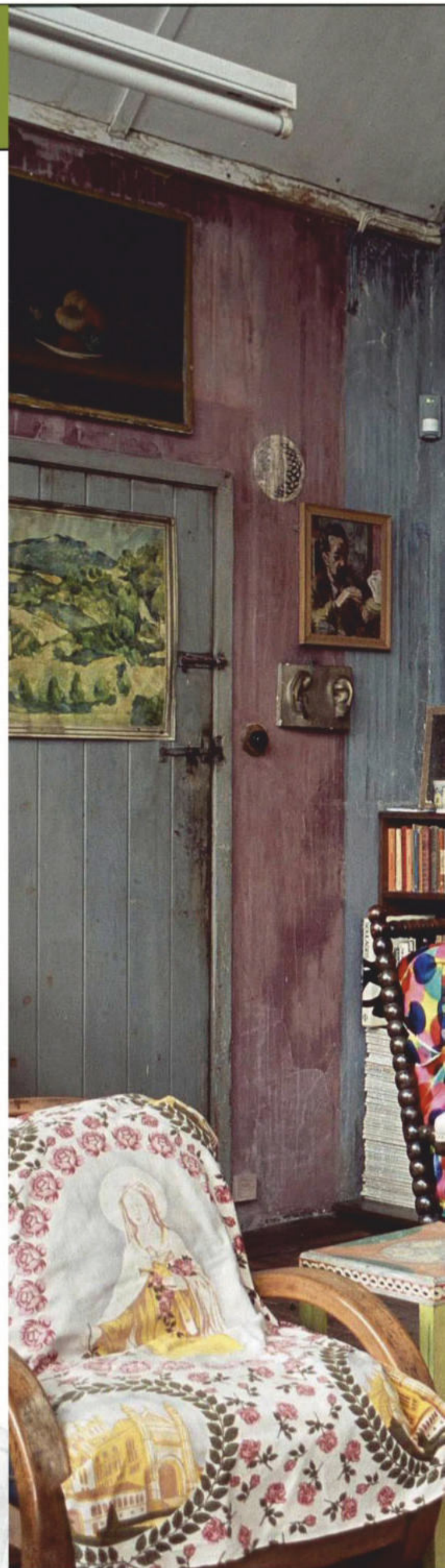
When they moved, Vanessa and her sons




Vanessa Stephen (left), photographed before her marriage to Clive Bell, and (right) her younger sister Virginia, pictured in 1902



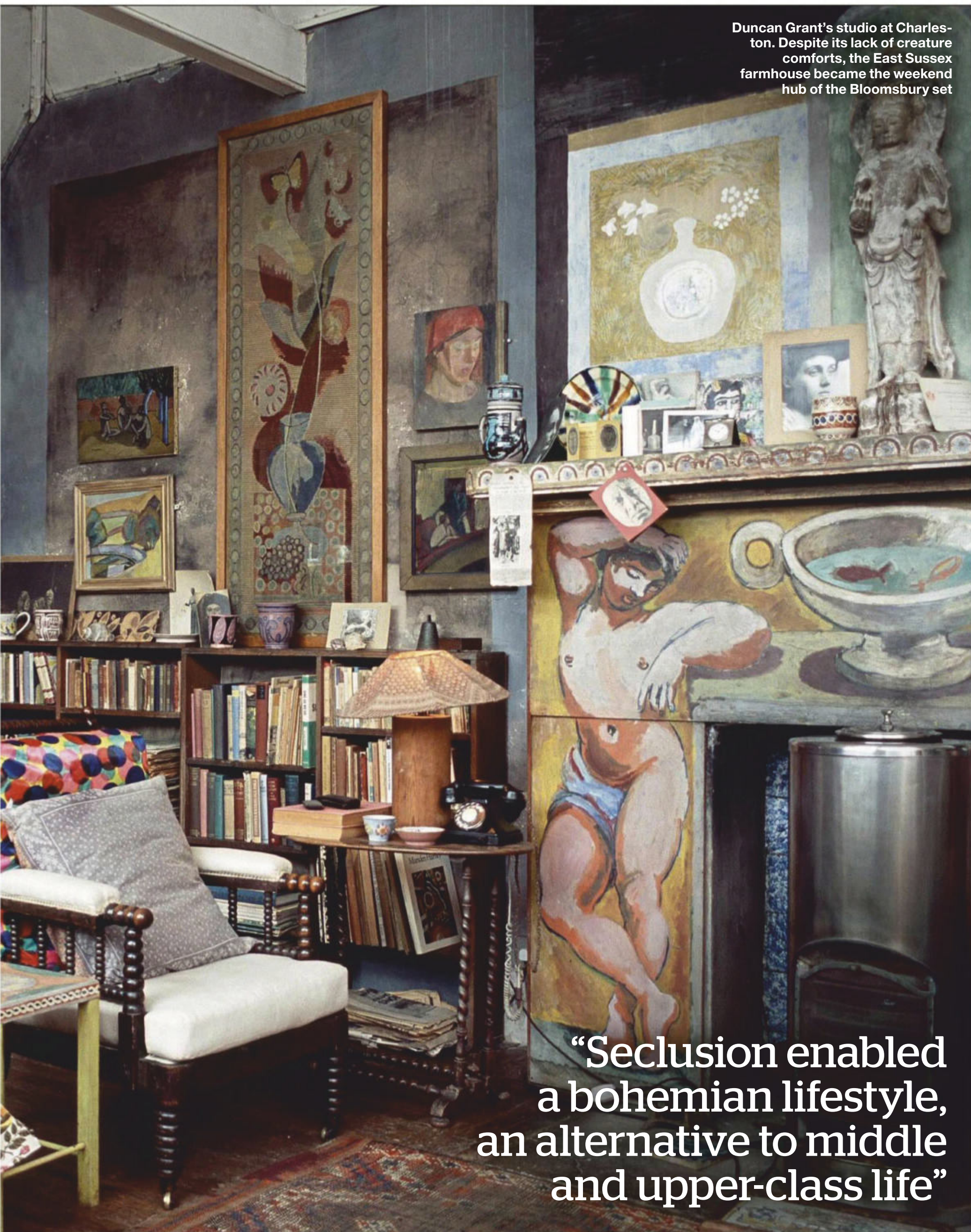
TONY TREE-CHARLESTON HOUSE







Duncan Grant's studio at Charleston. Despite its lack of creature comforts, the East Sussex farmhouse became the weekend hub of the Bloomsbury set



“Seclusion enabled a bohemian lifestyle, an alternative to middle and upper-class life”





**The Famous Women dinner set, designed by Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell from 1932–34, features portraits of famous women in history – from Cleopatra to Greta Garbo**

were accompanied by her close friend and fellow artist Duncan Grant and his lover, the writer David Garnett, along with a housemaid, a nurse and a cook. It made for a distinctly unconventional household, one that prioritised artistic pursuits over creature comforts. The house had no electricity and was served by a single cold-water tap.

If Charleston didn't offer comfort, it did provide security. Duncan and David were both conscientious objectors and, in order to avoid imprisonment for their beliefs, were required to find "work of national importance". Whether picking fruit on the farms of East Sussex qualified for this is moot, but living at Charleston did offer the pair seclusion, both in terms of their relationship and for the pursuit of Duncan's art – and of Vanessa's too.

"Charleston was an ideal working environment," agrees Maggie Humm, author of *Snapshots of Bloomsbury: The Private Lives of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell*. "Seclusion did enable a bohemian lifestyle, an alternative to a middle- and upper-class life – alternative schooling, alternative sexualities. They could paint every day without distraction. Charleston was also an inside/outside house where the garden provided inspiration for their

paintings, unlike the city."

The group's artistic endeavours can still be found all over the house – and not just hanging on the wall. Tables, chairs, beds, baths, fireplaces... none were spared the paintbrushes of Vanessa, Duncan or Clive Bell. The quantity of original art found around the farmhouse today certainly disproves the notion that Bloomsbury – thanks to writers like Woolf, EM Forster and Lytton Strachey – was principally a literary affair. Its visual art was of a similar quality and significance.

"Bloomsbury art altered public perception of 20th-century art," explains Humm. "The group's work impacted on collectors, galleries and publishers, and they became a centre of cultural authority. Charleston



**Taken at Charleston in 1928, this image shows (standing, left to right) Frances Partridge, Quentin and Julian Bell, Duncan Grant, Clive Bell and Beatrice Mayor. Kneeling is Roger Fry, with Raymond Mortimer in front**

## A NEAT OBSERVATION DESCRIBING THE BLOOMSBURY SET IS THAT IT LIVED IN SQUARES AND LOVED IN TRIANGLES

was a testing site." Vanessa and Duncan themselves were greatly informed by another Bloomsbury artist, Roger Fry, who helped broaden their palette of styles and influences.

### Sexual and artistic liberation

After the war ended, this idyll in the Sussex countryside entered what Vanessa's son Quentin later described as "the golden age of Charleston". The house became the weekend hub of the group, despite the continued absence of radiators, hot baths, electric lights or a telephone, none of which arrived until the 1930s. As Humm describes, the place was a hive of activity, entertainment and no small amount of joy.

"A typical weekend would start with Vanessa first down to breakfast – buttered toast with coarse salt and black coffee, followed by Duncan eating an orange and porridge. They would then both disappear to paint. Visitors might arrive at the house: [John Maynard] Keynes, Clive, Lytton Strachey... Garnett once arrived in

his Tiger Moth. Meals, presided over by Vanessa, were eaten by the light of oil lamps. Conversations about France and Italy would often take place on the terrace while watching the ducks on the pond. Then Vanessa's daughter Angelica might collect dressing-up clothes from the cupboard in her mother's bedroom for theatricals."

Mention of Angelica Bell brings up the subject of the intimate relationships within the group. Its members' sexual connections were often serpentine and overlapping. Angelica was born on Christmas Day 1918. She grew up believing that she had the same father as Vanessa's sons Julian and



## VISIT

### Charleston

Quentin – Clive Bell. However, her shared surname papered over the reality. Angelica's father was actually Duncan Grant who, despite being gay, was the true love of Vanessa's life. To complicate matters even more, Angelica later married and had four children with David Garnett – the ex-lover of her biological father. A neat observation describing the Bloomsbury set is that it lived in squares and loved in triangles.

Another former lover of Duncan's – the economist John Maynard Keynes – wasn't a permanent resident of Charleston, but visited so frequently that he was given his own bedroom. It was in this room that he wrote his most famous work, *Economic Consequences of the Peace* in 1919. Despite his position as the chancellor's senior adviser, Keynes was a keen advocate of the arts and later became the founding chairman of the Committee for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (later known as the Arts Council).

### Survival and legacy

The golden age of Charleston, of those fun-loving weekends, came to a crashing end in 1937 when Julian Bell was killed in the Spanish Civil War. Four years later, Virginia committed suicide. Both events impacted hugely on Vanessa, for whom Charleston then became a sanctuary. "During the Second World War," says Humm, "planes regularly flew overhead, but Vanessa and Duncan could trust their own art in a disintegrating world. They continued to paint, to decorate Charleston and to travel after the war."

Vanessa died in 1961; Clive three years later. Duncan lived on at Charleston until his death in 1978, at which point Angelica moved in to sort out what was an increasingly crumbling house in a state of disrepair. Vanessa had never owned the property; it had been rented from the Firle estate for nearly 70 years. Angelica resigned the lease and the house was earmarked as a home for Deborah Gage, cousin of the owner Lord Gage. The situation proved fortuitous for Charleston's survival. Deborah was an art dealer and, in visiting the house, realised its historical importance – and the artistic worth of its painted furniture and objects. Accordingly, she and Angelica established the Charleston Trust, dedicated to the renovation and preservation of the house.



Near Lewes, East Sussex

● [charleston.org.uk](http://charleston.org.uk)

Charleston now resembles how it would have appeared in the 1950s, but with many artefacts dating from several decades earlier. As Quentin Bell reflected, it has become "a kind of time capsule in which the public can examine a world which has vanished".

But as well preserved as the house, its contents and gardens are, the site now boasts distinctly 21st-century touches, with state-of-the-art galleries and an event space that holds appropriate gatherings, such as a recent short-story festival. Displayed in the gallery is the Famous Women dinner set that the art historian Kenneth Clark commissioned Vanessa and Duncan to design in 1932. Featuring 48 notable women from history, plus the odd notable contemporary figure, the plates feature portraits of Jane Austen, Helen of Troy, Catherine the Great, Christina Rossetti and even Greta Garbo.

If time travel were an option, who knows what the Bloomsbury set might make of their art, ideas and lifestyle being preserved more than 100 years after Vanessa, Duncan and the others first moved into Charleston. Maggie Humm has an idea. "All were intelligent, witty people who may have found it ironic that their textile designs were mass-produced by Laura Ashley to contribute to saving the house. The current cataloguing and digitising of more than 8,000 pieces saved by Angelica Garnett would fill them, as it does us scholars, with hope for Charleston's future development." ■



**Maggie Humm** is emeritus professor of cultural studies at the University of East London. Her books include *Snapshots of Bloomsbury: The Private Lives of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell* (Tate Publishing, 2005). Words: Nige Tassell

## ARTISTS' HOMES FOUR MORE PLACES TO EXPLORE

### 1 Red House

BEXLEYHEATH, GREATER LONDON

#### Where William Morris could dream

The Red House was the rural retreat of William Morris, the guiding light of the Arts and Crafts movement, and his muse/wife Janey – a place where Morris could indulge his dream of "transforming the world with beauty". In 2003, the house was purchased by the National Trust, who set about restoring it to its original condition.

● [nationaltrust.org.uk/red-house](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/red-house)

### 2 Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden

ST IVES, CORNWALL

#### Where a sculptor sought sanctuary

St Ives became a haven for artists during the Second World War, among them sculptor Barbara Hepworth. She moved into Trewyn Studios in 1950, where she remained until her death in 1975. The studio, now a museum in line with Hepworth's wishes, features some of her greatest sculptures (including *Sphere with Inner Form*, pictured right).

● [tate.org.uk](http://tate.org.uk)



### 3 Brantwood

CONISTON WATER, CUMBRIA

#### Where Ruskin drew inspiration

Artist, writer and social reformer, John Ruskin spent the final 28 years of his life at Brantwood, in the heart of the Lake District. A strong influence on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and William Morris, Ruskin's work can be found throughout the grand house, which today hosts art exhibitions and talks.

● [brantwood.org.uk](http://brantwood.org.uk)

### 4 Broughton House

KIRKCUDBRIGHT, DUMFRIES

& GALLOWAY

#### Where the 'Glasgow Boy' retreated

The home and studio of Edward Atkinson Hornel, Broughton House was bought by the Scottish artist in 1901. Known for his landscapes and part of the 'Glasgow Boys' group of artists, Hornel's work is on display in abundance here.

● [nts.org.uk](http://nts.org.uk)



**BBC**

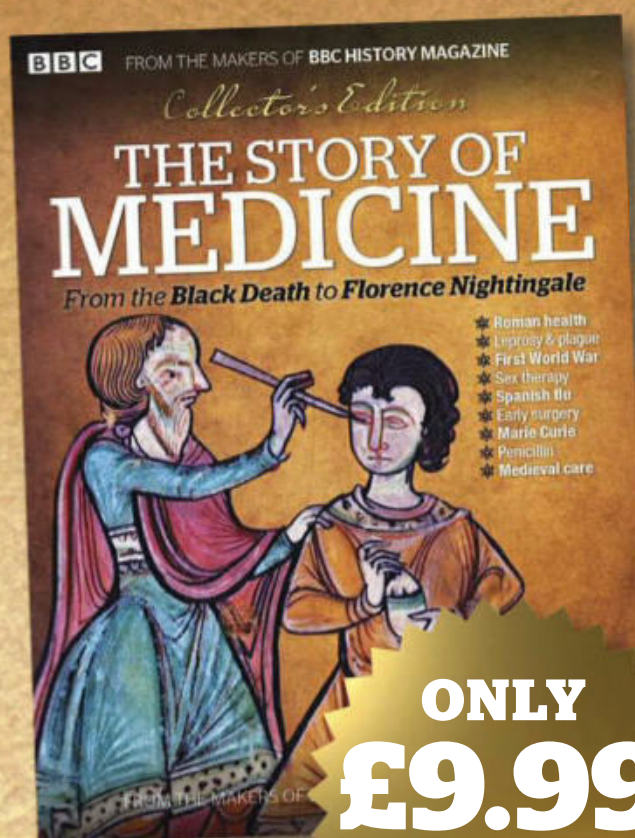
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# FIVE THINGS TO DO IN FEBRUARY

## Kingfishers and kings

### THREE NEW GALLERIES

#### **Ancient Egypt Rediscovered, Exploring East Asia, and the Art of Ceramics**

National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh

From 8 February

☎ 0300 123 6789

● [nms.ac.uk](http://nms.ac.uk)

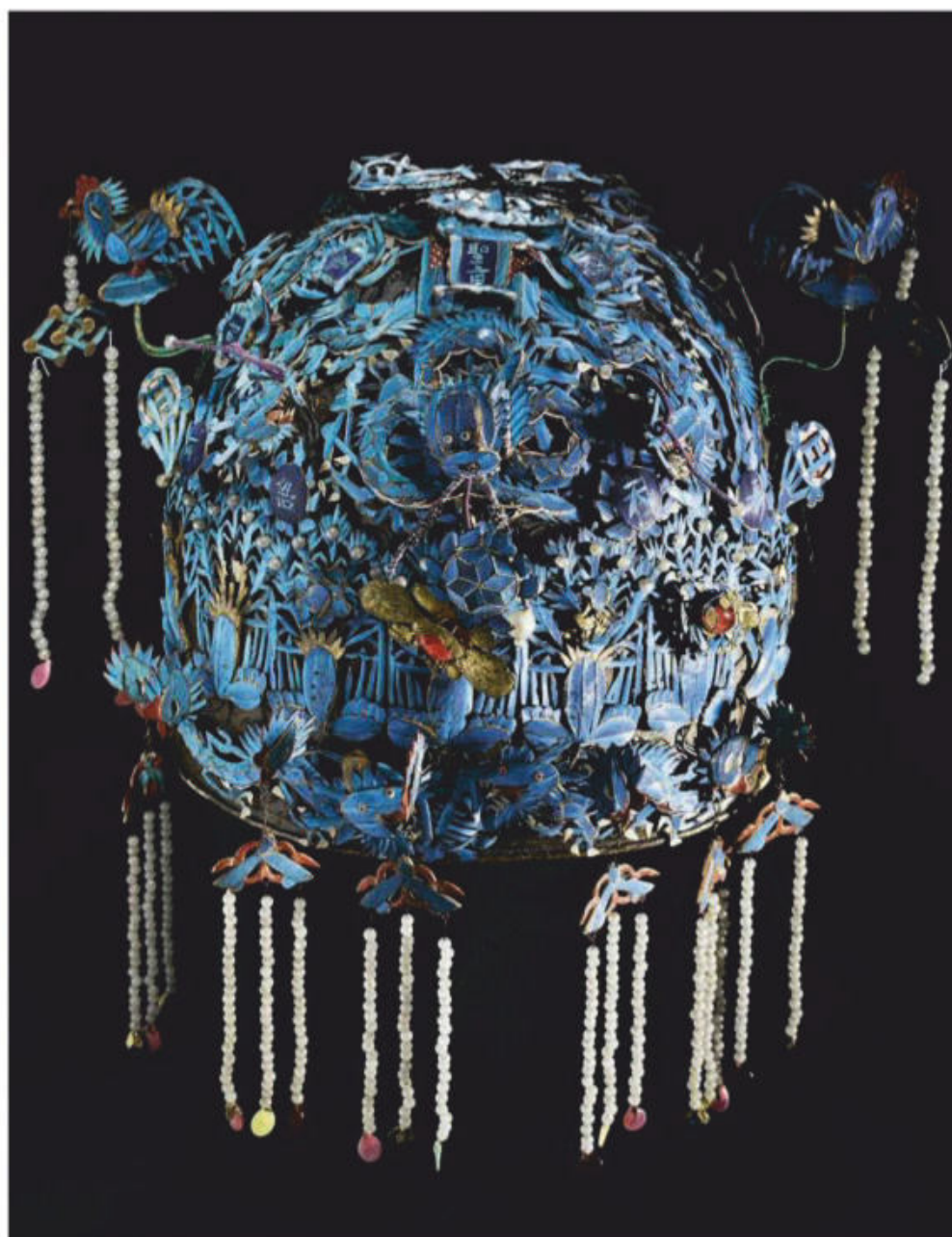


**T**his month, National Museums Scotland will reveal the culmination of its 15-year, £80m redevelopment project, in the form of three new galleries: Ancient Egypt Rediscovered, Exploring East Asia and the Art of Ceramics. The new galleries will allow a number of internationally significant objects to go on public display – 40 per cent of these will be on permanent show for the first time in at least a generation.

Ancient Egypt Rediscovered – whose opening coincides with the 200th anniversary of the first ancient Egyptian objects entering National Museums Scotland's collections – will explore 3,000 years of Egyptian history. Highlights will include the only intact royal burial group outside Egypt, as well as a unique double coffin.

The Exploring East Asia gallery will examine the traditions, peoples and histories of China, Japan and Korea. Among the objects on show will be Chinese oracle bones from 1200 BC, and a headdress from 18th-century China, made with kingfisher feathers (pictured right).

Ceramics dating from the 11th century to the present day will feature in the final gallery, which will explore their versatility and creative use across art and science.



A c18th-century Chinese headdress, made from blue kingfisher feathers and covered with dragons and other motifs

### EXHIBITION / FREE ENTRY

#### **Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific Perspectives**

British Museum, London

Until 4 August

☎ 020 7323 8000

● [britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)

In 1768, James Cook left Plymouth, England, on the first of three expeditions to the Pacific Ocean. Marking the 250th anniversary of the voyage, this exhibition explores how Pacific Islanders have remembered these encounters, often reimagining their impact in artworks.



A shirt decorated with designs from drawings done on Captain Cook's voyages (1770–80)

### TALK / FREE ENTRY

#### **Horsing the British Army, 1914–18**

National Army Museum, Chelsea, London

8 February

☎ 020 7730 0717

● [nam.ac.uk/whats-on/horsing-british-army-1914-18](http://nam.ac.uk/whats-on/horsing-british-army-1914-18)

In this free talk, Dr Graham Winton will explore the challenges of supplying and caring for British Army horses during the First World War, when military use of horses increased seven times over.

### EXHIBITION / FREE ENTRY

#### **Babel: Adventures in Translation**

The Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford

15 February–2 June

☎ 01865 277094

● [bodleian.ox.ac.uk](http://bodleian.ox.ac.uk)

Bodleian Libraries will be exploring the power and importance of translation through a range of historical objects. Highlights in the exhibition will include a 4,000-year-old bowl inscribed with a language that remains undeciphered and an unpublished Tolkien notebook that shows the author's experiments with Esperanto before he created his fictional Elvish languages.

### EXHIBITION

#### **Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing**

Various locations

1 February–6 May

● [rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/leonardo-da-vinci-a-life-in-drawing#/](http://rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/leonardo-da-vinci-a-life-in-drawing#/)

Marking 500 years since the death of Leonardo da Vinci, the Royal Collection Trust will be exhibiting 144 of his greatest drawings in 12 simultaneous exhibitions across the UK. Venues in Ulster, Leeds, Cardiff, Birmingham, Derby, Bristol, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Southampton and Sunderland will each have 12 of the artist's drawings on show.



## MY FAVOURITE PLACE

# Warsaw, Poland



by **Chandrika Kaul**

The latest in our historical holiday series finds Chandrika exploring a rejuvenated and restored eastern European capital

**C**an I start with a confession? On the (ashamedly) few occasions I have contemplated Poland as a destination for a city break, I have been drawn to the old-world ambience of Kraków. However, as 2018 marked the centenary of Poland declaring its independence from the German, Austrian and Russian empires, it seemed the perfect year to explore the country's capital. And, as I soon discovered, Warsaw is a revelation.

My perception of Warsaw had long been dominated by the horrors of the decimation of the city's Jewish population during the Second World War and its near-total physical destruction at the hands of the Nazis, as well as the crushing austerity of the communist era that followed. However, the city has risen from the ashes. The renaissance of its historic centre – comprising the Old Town, New Town and the buildings lining its grand thoroughfare, Krakowskie Przedmieście – is nothing short of astonishing, and has earned the city Unesco World Cultural Heritage recognition.

The best way to get a flavour of Warsaw's regeneration is to take a stroll through this

partially pedestrianised historic centre (as distinct from the modern commercial centre), past the solid ramparts of the Barbican, the city walls and the numerous churches with their lavishly decorated interiors. Temptation lurks around every corner. There are craft emporiums (amber jewellery is highly prized) and eateries serving local delicacies and traditional sweets (*wuzetka* and *zygmuntówka* cakes), invariably accompanied by liberal dollops of cream!

The whole area is an architectural treat, packed with beautiful merchant houses and squares with elegant facades. The largest and loveliest of these is the Old Town Market Place,

with its statue of Syrenka, the 'Mermaid of Warsaw', symbol of the city. From many points in the Old and New Towns you can walk to the Vistula river, the banks of which have been rejuvenated with an esplanade, parks and arcades.

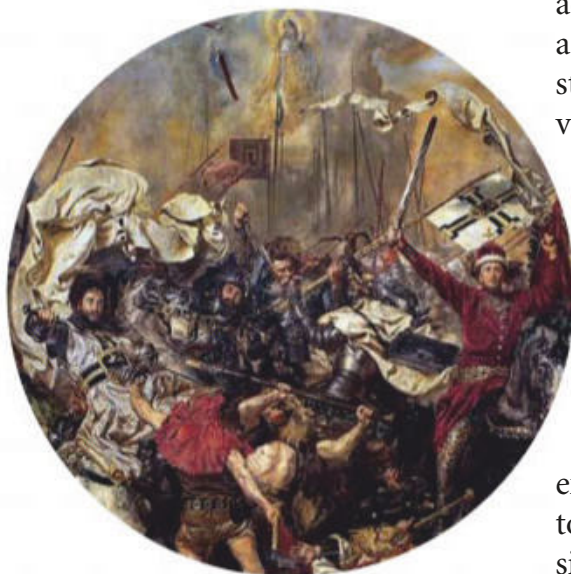
Perhaps one of the most majestic of all Warsaw's landmarks is the Royal Castle, originally dating from the 17th century but rebuilt in the 1970s. This, the former official residence of Polish monarchs, is well worth a tour. I particularly enjoyed the collection of paintings by the 18th-century artist Bernardo Bellotto, nephew of the famous Canaletto, whose depictions of Warsaw were so accurate that they were used to aid the city's postwar reconstruction. Art lovers should also visit the impressive National Museum, which houses Jan Matejko's famous 1878 painting *Battle of Grunwald* (shown left).

Maria Skłodowska – better known as Marie Curie – has long been one of my heroes, and so it was exciting to explore the museum dedicated to the first female Nobel laureate, situated in the New Town in the building of her birth.

If Curie is among Warsaw's best-known daughters, then the

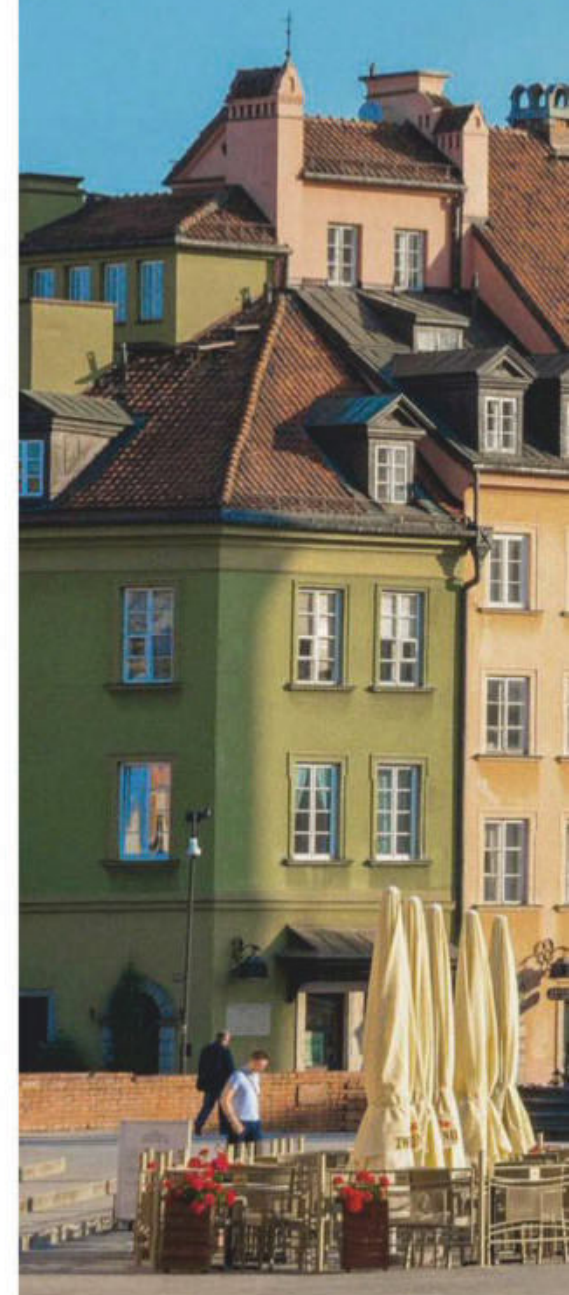
composer and pianist Fryderyk Chopin is certainly among its favourite sons – and the Polish capital abounds with tributes to his musical genius. I visited a number of these, armed with a booklet from the tourist office. Among the most memorable is Holy Cross church, which houses an urn containing Chopin's heart, embedded in the left pillar of the main nave.

The church is sited on Krakowskie Przedmieście, which is home to an array of magnificent structures, including the Presidential Palace and the University of Warsaw. From here, you can get a bus to the sprawling Łazienki Park to view an evocative monumental statue of Chopin lost in thought



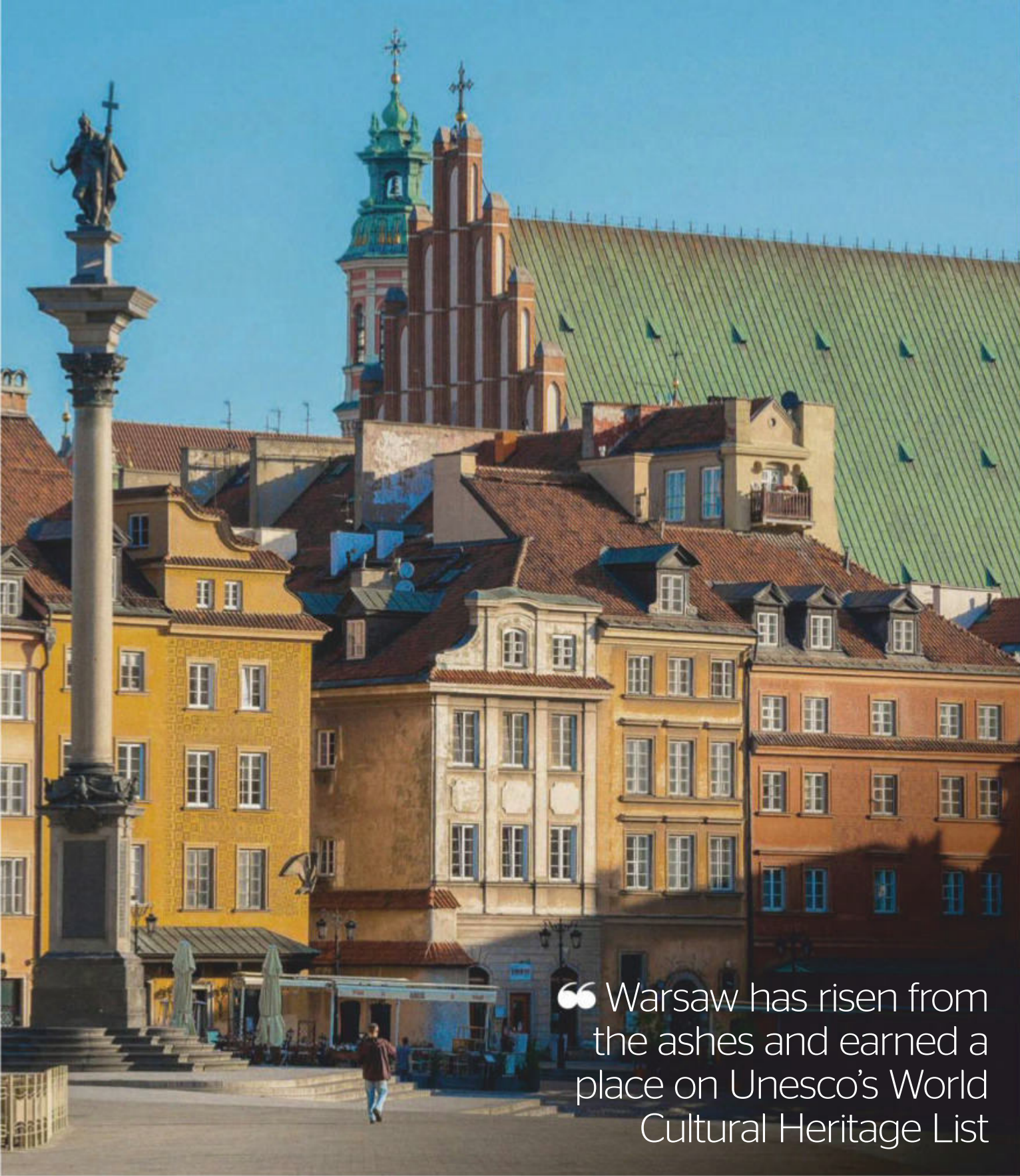
**Jan Matejko's *Battle of Grunwald*, which depicts a famous Polish-Lithuanian victory**

The reconstructed Castle Square offers a glimpse of how Warsaw would have looked in the past



GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY





“Warsaw has risen from the ashes and earned a place on Unesco’s World Cultural Heritage List

under the boughs of a willow tree. Open-air concerts are held in the park every Sunday in the summer. Despite the heavens opening on the day I was there, it would be hard to imagine a more romantic setting for the great composer’s music.

### Terrible years

Warsaw may have been rebuilt from the rubble of the Second World War, but that conflict is still woven into the fabric of the city. Those keen to discover the distinctive imprint of those terrible years should visit the only surviving fragment of the ghetto wall that enclosed the city’s Jewish population, now sandwiched between Sienna and Złota streets. Amid its

contemporary suburban setting, I found it almost surreal to try to imagine the horrors that took place in this city within a city.

You can gain a fuller appreciation of wartime Warsaw by visiting two museums: the POLIN (Hebrew for ‘rest here’) Museum of the History of Polish Jews, housed in a modernist gem of a building; and the Warsaw Rising Museum, which commemorates the Polish resistance’s full-scale but ultimately futile attempt to liberate the city from the Nazis in 1944.

Warsaw’s postwar past also casts a long shadow over the city – and nowhere is this more conspicuous than in the form of the city’s tallest building, the Palace of Culture and Science.

Gifted by the nations of the USSR, this archetypal example of a socialist-realist tower block was meant to represent the spirit of progress. Despite repeated calls for its demolition, today the palace’s almost 3,000 rooms house multiple cinemas, theatres, museums, orchestras, and municipal offices. But the highlight surely has to be the viewing platform, from where I got a fine view of a city that offers a compelling mix of old and new. **II**

**Chandrika Kaul** is reader in modern history at the University of St Andrews

**Next month:** Get travel inspiration from our 2019 holiday supplement

## ADVICE FOR TRAVELLERS

### BEST TIME TO GO

Temperatures vary wildly in Warsaw: while the summer months are balmy and often wet, the mercury can dip below zero from December to February. A peak-season visit means you can catch the feted open-air Chopin recitals – but the city is magical in the snow, with Christmas lights wreathing those famous squares.

### GETTING THERE

Warsaw Chopin airport operates flights from Heathrow, Gatwick and other UK locations such as Liverpool. The city’s bus, metro and tram lines run on a shared ticketing system, with good-value day and weekend passes available. Over 70s travel for free!

### WHAT TO PACK

Phrase book, walking shoes, waterproofs and warm clothing, depending on the season.

### WHAT TO BRING BACK

Amber jewellery, vodka and *pączki* – rich donuts made with cream fillings – could make you very popular.



### Been there...

Have you visited **Warsaw**? Do you have a top tip for readers? Contact us via Twitter or Facebook

**twitter.com/historyextra**

**facebook.com/historyextra**



# HALF TERM *Heritage*

With half term round the corner, now is the best time to plan an adventure with all the historians in your life.



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## The Beatrix Potter Gallery

Featuring original illustrations from some of Beatrix Potter's most popular little white books, our 2019 exhibition 'Telling Tales' looks at why, over 100 years after the publication of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, her delightful characters still resonate with so many of us today. Find the Gallery in the heart of Hawkshead, Cumbria.

015394 36355 // [nationaltrust.org.uk/beatrice-potter-gallery-and-hawkshead](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/beatrice-potter-gallery-and-hawkshead)



## The Tiger Who Came to Tea at Blickling Estate

Reflecting upon the significant on-going conservation of Blickling's eighteenth century Long Gallery library, the estate is hosting The Tiger Who Came to Tea, 50th anniversary exhibition from Saturday 12 January – Sunday 3 March. Alongside displays of author Judith Kerr's delightful illustrations, notes and sketches, the exhibition features fun family trails in the house and garden and a life-size model tiger.

01263 738030 // [nationaltrust.org.uk/bllickling](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/bllickling)



## Gatwick Aviation Museum

Gatwick Aviation Museum has a unique collection of British aircraft from the "golden age" of British aircraft manufacture. From the end of WWII until the 1970s British aircraft designers produced some of the most innovative and advanced aircraft of the day.

01293 862417 // [gatwick-aviation-museum.co.uk](http://gatwick-aviation-museum.co.uk)



## Weald & Downland Living Museum

Wrap up warm and head to the Museum for creative activities with an animals theme this half-term, including trails, arts and crafts, and spectacular stories to inspire all of your family! Most activities are indoors and run from 11am-3pm. Come and explore our 50 historic homes and buildings, and meet friendly farm animals. Dogs on leads are welcome. Free parking.

01243 811 363 // [wealddown.co.uk](http://wealddown.co.uk)



## Rosslyn Chapel

Founded in 1446, the beauty of the Chapel's setting and its ornate stonework have inspired, attracted and intrigued visitors for generations. Visitor centre tells the Chapel's story – from its 15th century origins to the Da Vinci Code and beyond. Just 7 miles from Edinburgh city centre. Open all year.

0131 440 2159 // [rosslynchapel.com](http://rosslynchapel.com)



## Mingary Castle

Mingary Castle, a Scheduled Monument, dating back to the 13th Century, recently renovated from a complete ruin to the highest standards. Mingary is unique, intimate & homely, a true escape on the beautiful Ardnamurchan peninsula. With only four suites, the castle is ideally suited for Exclusive Hire for that special occasion, or just a room for that romantic escape.

01972 510 715 // [mingarycastle.com](http://mingarycastle.com)



# UNDISCOVERED MUSEUMS

Explore the fascinating collection and displays available throughout the UK in this collections of museums that you may not have yet discovered



## Gilbert White's House

Gilbert White was one of the leading naturalists of the 18th Century. His home in Selborne, Hampshire is now a museum that celebrates exploring the natural world, with galleries dedicated to Victorian explorer Frank Oates and Captain Lawrence Oates who went to the South Pole with Scott in 1912.

01420 511275 | [gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk](http://gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk)



## Shipwreck Museum

A small museum, set in the historic Old Town of Hastings with a fascinating collection of shipwreck and shipwreck-related artefacts, including the remains of the earliest seagoing vessel ever discovered in the northern hemisphere. Find out all about our two major local wrecks, the Dutch East Indiaman Amsterdam and Charles II's warship Anne. Free admission.

01424 437452 | [shipwreckmuseum.co.uk](http://shipwreckmuseum.co.uk)



## Murray Edwards College

Founded in 1986, the New Hall Art Collection at Murray Edwards College, University of Cambridge, is one of the largest and most significant collections of contemporary art by women in the world, with over five hundred works by artists of international quality and renown – including Dame Paula Rego and Lubaina Himid.

01223 762100 | [art.newhall.cam.ac.uk](http://art.newhall.cam.ac.uk)



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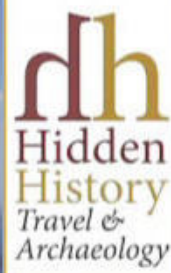
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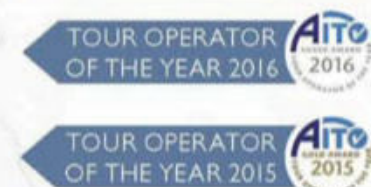


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## QUIZ

BY JULIAN HUMPHRYS

Try your hand at this month's history quiz

ONLINE  
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historyextra.com  
/quiz

1. In July 1948, 13-year-old Sylvia Diggory became the first person to receive something. What was it?

2. Which classic 19th-century English novel's climactic scene is set at Stonehenge?



3. What role did Jane Cooper play in the royal court of Mary Tudor?

4. *Mary Rose*, *Vasa*, *Titanic*, *Bismarck*. Which of these ships didn't sink on its maiden voyage?

5. The year 1536 saw a major rebellion in northern England against the policies of Henry VIII's government. What was it known as?

6. Although this medal was instituted in 1943, no man or woman has ever been awarded it. Why?

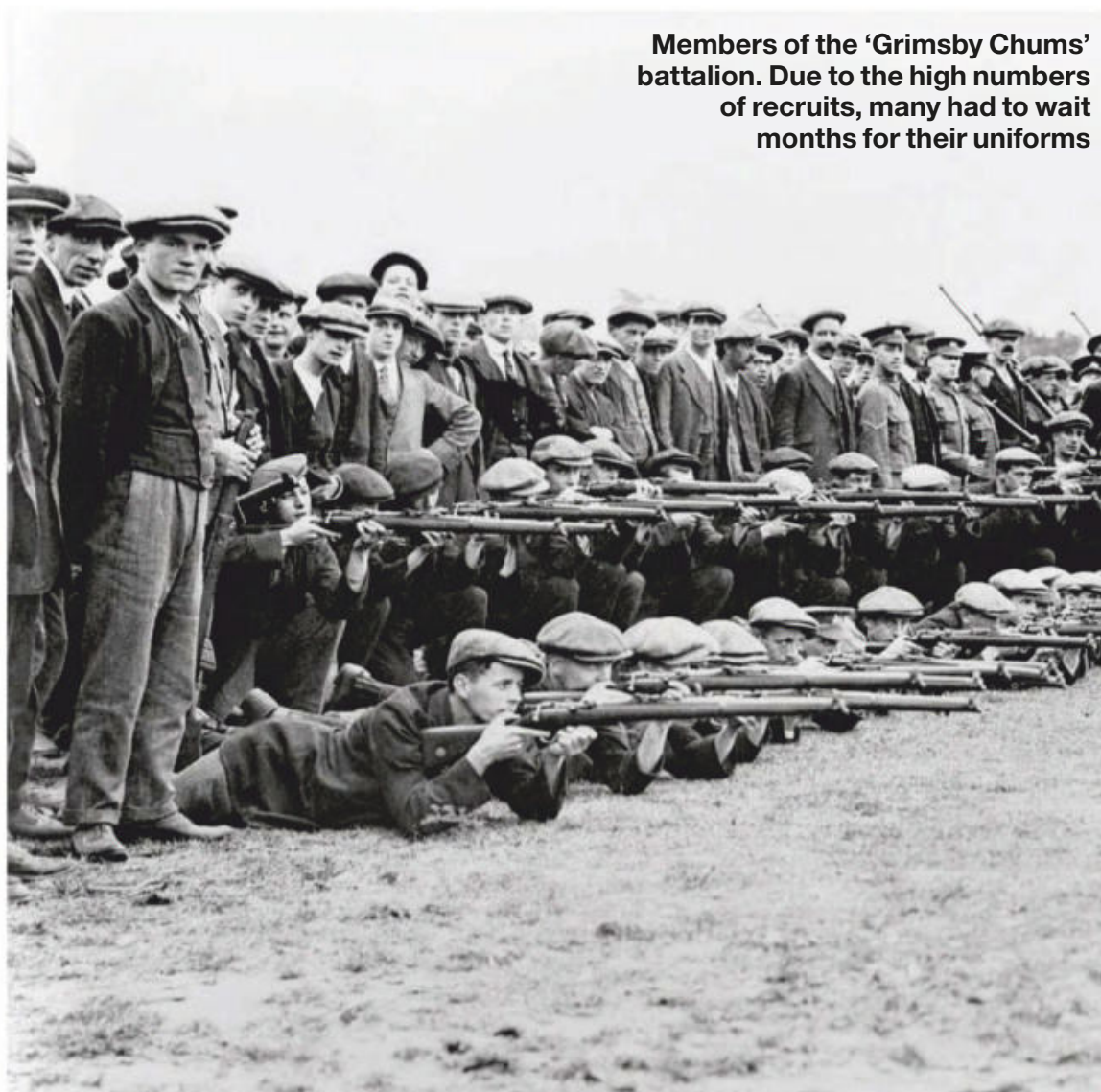


### QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Free treatment on the NHS.
2. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.
3. Court jester.
4. *Mary Rose*.
5. The Pilgrimage of Grace.
6. It's the Dickin Medal, which is awarded for outstanding acts of bravery or devotion to duty by animals.

### GOT A QUESTION?

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Members of the 'Grimsby Chums' battalion. Due to the high numbers of recruits, many had to wait months for their uniforms

## Q Did the formation of ill-prepared 'pals battalions' contribute to the heavy British losses during the battle of the Somme?

@shanedgj, on Twitter

At the outbreak of the First World War, the British secretary of state for war, Lord Kitchener, issued a call for volunteers – made famous by the iconic 'Your Country Needs You' recruiting poster – which produced astonishing results. He had hoped for 500,000 men, but more than 2.5 million had volunteered by 1916. These men became known as the 'New Army'. They included the famous 'pals battalions', in which men were encouraged to enlist alongside friends, colleagues, relatives and others from their local community.

Unfortunately the vast number of volunteers created problems, as there was no infrastructure for such a huge force, leading to a chronic shortage of officers and instructors. As a result,

New Army training was primitive, and some soldiers went into action having never fired live rounds.

At the battle of the Somme, commanders feared that New Army soldiers were incapable of the complex fire-and-movement tactics used by the prewar army, and instructed them to advance at walking pace to maintain cohesion and prevent panic. Not all units followed these directions, but those that did suffered terribly as they were mown down by German fire. The price of inadequate training was indeed paid in blood in 1916.

Spencer Jones is the author of *At All Costs: The British Army on the Western Front, 1916* (Helion & Co, 2018)



## SAMANTHA'S RECIPE CORNER



Every issue, picture editor **Samantha Nott** brings you a recipe from the past. This month it's a seaweed-based delicacy known as 'Welshman's caviar'

### Laverbread breakfast

A traditional, centuries-old Welsh recipe, laverbread is a distinctive dish made from seaweed, which makes for a brilliantly salty breakfast ingredient.

Hollywood royalty Richard Burton even termed it 'Welshman's caviar'.

Abundant along the shoreline of west Wales, laver seaweed was historically a popular food of the working classes. In a 1607 edition of his book *Britannia*, the antiquarian William Camden recalled encountering a bunch of Pembrokeshire locals gathering laver along the beach. During the 18th century, it became a classic component of miners' hearty working breakfasts, fried up with locally picked cockles.

If you're not near laverbread's spiritual home of Swansea today, you can pick up a jar from the shelves of high-end delicatessens.

Laverbread can be eaten hot or cold – personally, I think eating it cold brings out the flavour better. Serve it with thick, well-buttered toast. Add cockles for the authentic Welsh taste.

#### INGREDIENTS

**3 thick strips of bacon**  
**2 tbsp of Laverbread**  
**2 tbsp of oats**  
**1 egg**

#### METHOD

Heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium flame, then place the bacon in the pan.

Mix the laverbread and the oats in a bowl until the mixture combines. Season with salt and white pepper to taste.

Once the bacon is sizzling, add the laverbread to the pan. Gently flatten with a spoon into the frying pan, until you get your desired thickness.

Cook until bacon and laverbread cake are crispy, then add the egg. Gently cook until ready.

#### VERDICT

"A deliciously robust addition to a cooked breakfast – it will definitely set you up for a good day!"

**Difficulty: 1/10**

**Time: 15 mins**

*Recipe sourced from The Pembrokeshire Beach Food Company [beachfood.co.uk](http://beachfood.co.uk)*



Slaves attend to their mistress's hair in a second or third-century AD tomb relief from Gallia Belgica, in modern-day Germany. Many slaves were transported across the Roman empire

### Q Were Britons taken as slaves in the Roman period? If so, would they have been sent to Europe or kept in Britain?

Les Wood, Norfolk

**A** The enslavement of people was a common event in the ancient world, Britain (or rather Britannia) included. At the beginning of the first millennium AD, the Greek geographer Strabo noted that Britannia exported grain, cattle, gold, silver, iron, hides and hunting dogs – as well as slaves. When Julius Caesar invaded the island in the 50s BC, Cicero commented that slaves were the only likely booty, but expressed doubt over their non-menial capacities.

Enslaved men, women and children with Celtic names are found across the Roman empire – although names alone are not necessarily safe indicators of an individual's origin. Looking the other way, the slave-administrator

Anencletus (known from the tombstone he commissioned at London's Ludgate Hill) was owned by the province – ie Britannia – but boasted a Greek name (meaning 'blameless'). Also from London comes a sales receipt for the purchase of a woman of Gallic origin – by a slave who belonged to another slave, who in turn belonged to the Roman emperor!

Whether you were Gallic, Celtic or otherwise, slavery was a reality faced by many in the Roman period; and as with enslaved Britons, these individuals may have served close to or far away from their original homes.

**Dr Ulrike Roth** is a reader in ancient history at the University of Edinburgh

BRIDGEMAN



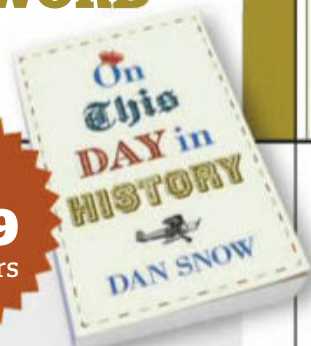
# PRIZE CROSSWORD

Ancient Egyptian scarab beetles were seen to offer protection (see 17 across)



## CROSSWORD PRIZE

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### On This Day in History

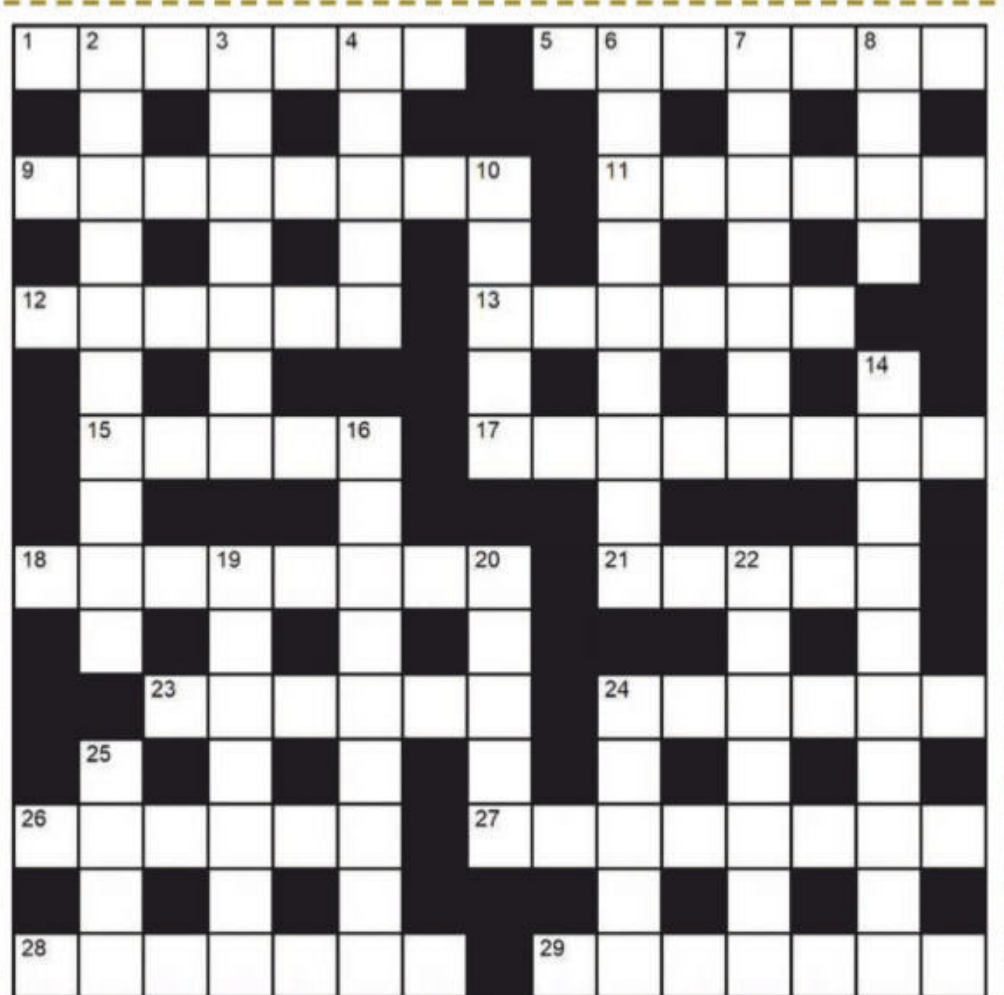
by Dan Snow

In his latest book, popular historian and broadcaster Dan Snow highlights a historical event that happened on each date of the year. From history's shortest war and the most important British battle you've never heard of to the first meeting of Lennon and McCartney, Snow brings 365 events that shaped history back to life.

**HOW TO ENTER** Open to residents of the UK (inc Channel Islands). Post entries to **BBC History Magazine, February 2019 Crossword**, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA or email them to [february2019@historycomps.co.uk](mailto:february2019@historycomps.co.uk) by 5pm on 20 February 2019. Entrants must supply full name, address and phone number. The winners will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. Winners' names will appear in the April 2019 issue. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in full in the box below. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will use personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy at [immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy/privacy/](http://immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy/privacy/). Immediate Media Company Limited (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) would love to send you newsletters, together with special offers and other promotions. If you would not like to receive these, please write 'NO INFO' on your entry. Branded BBC titles are licensed from or published jointly with BBC Worldwide (the commercial arm of the BBC). Please tick here ☐ if you'd like to receive regular newsletters, special offers and promotions from BBC Worldwide by email. Your information will be handled in accordance with the BBC Worldwide privacy policy: [bbcworldwide.com/privacy](http://bbcworldwide.com/privacy)

### Across

- 1** He became archbishop of Canterbury in controversial circumstances and was deposed in 1070 (7)  
**5** She governed Normandy while her husband, William, was engaged in the conquest of England (7)  
**9** Members of a pre-Protestant Christian movement founded by John Wycliffe in the 14th century (8)  
**11** Black Country town whose 11th-century castle grounds were turned into a zoo in the 1930s (6)  
**12** English adventurer and one-time royal favourite executed on the orders of James VI & I (6)  
**13** Twentieth-century, Latvian-born British historian of ideas, Sir \_\_\_\_ Berlin (6)  
**15/6 down** Type of castle introduced to Britain by the Normans; an important factor in their conquest (5-3-6)  
**17** Object, such as the scarab beetle of ancient Egypt, supposedly endowed with protective supernatural powers (8)  
**18** Market town north of Liverpool noted for its gingerbread (now celebrated in a local festival) (8)  
**21** Surname of the second president (successor of Joseph Smith) of the Mormon church (5)  
**23** Annie, 19th/20th-century British social reformer and prominent supporter of Indian independence (6)  
**24/7 down** A term for the many Native American tribes once occupying an area from the Mississippi river to the Rocky mountains (6,7)  
**26** Anthony, the 'Flying Dutchman', who made fighter aircraft for Germany in the First World War and later established companies in the US and the Netherlands (6)  
**27** The constitutional reforms of the Provisions of Oxford were forced upon this king of England (5,3)  
**28** Lincoln's famous one was delivered at the site of a battle considered to be the American Civil War's turning point (7)  
**29** The 19th-century US economist Henry George was a champion of this as the sole source of government revenues (4,3)



### Down

- 2** One-time chancellor of England who wrote the influential *History of King Richard III* (6,4)  
**3** First name of Reverend White of Selborne, Hampshire, an 18th-century pioneering naturalist (7)  
**4** See 25 down  
**6** See 15 across  
**7** See 24 across  
**8** An assembly of the holy Roman empire, such as that before which Martin Luther appeared on heresy charges (4)  
**10** Satirist from 17th/18th century whose great work has become a classic of children's literature (5)  
**14** African lake, first seen by Europeans when explorers Burton and Speke came across it in their search for the Nile's source (10)  
**16** Ancient Greek Peloponnese city-state, noted for its temple to Asclepius (9)  
**19** The first recorded holder of this House of Commons office was Sir Thomas de Hungerford in 1377 (7)  
**20** Jack \_\_\_, the 17th-century English executioner, notorious for his inept, barbarous methods (5)  
**22** The first great Muslim dynasty to rule the Caliphate empire between 661 and 750 (7)

- 24** Anglo-Saxon king who made 7th-century Mercia into a powerful force (5)  
**25/4 down** British prime minister, remembered for his role in the loss of the country's American colonies (4,5)

Compiled by **Eddie James**

### SOLUTION TO OUR CHRISTMAS 2018 CROSSWORD

**Across:** 1/34/14 Battle of Bunker Hill 6 Skiffle 10 Venice 11 Ravenna 13/23 Cold War 15 Trail 16 Al Capone 18 Lancer 20 Ada Lovelace 22 Abwehr 24 Henry Cort 26 Hammurabi 28 Chindit 31 Harry S Truman 35 Lumumba 37 Reith 38 PLF 39 Cnut 40 Riot Act 41/3 Monkey Trial 42 Abelard 43 Damascus.  
**Down:** 2 Americas 4 Elector 5 Fermanagh 6 Singapore 7 INA 8 FA Cup 9 Ellen Terry 12 Volta 17 Chevron 19 Cranmer 21 Auction 25 Casablanca 27 Burma Road 29 Henrietta 30 Jeffreys 32 Samaria 33 Morgan 34 Bohemia 36 Motte 38 Punic.

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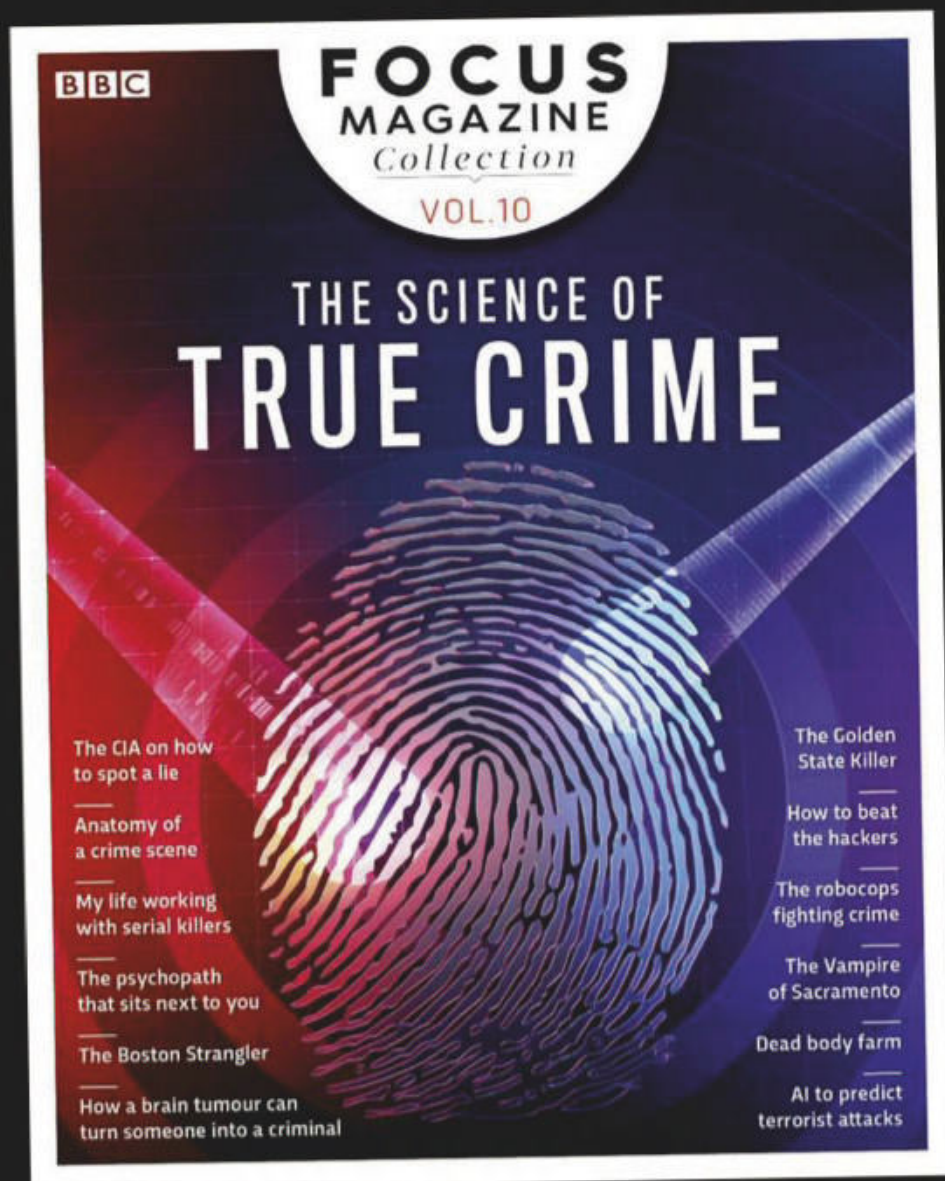
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## Victorian underworld

Heather Shore challenges common misconceptions about 19th-century crime



## Viking women

Judith Jesch explores many facets of Norse women from war to domestic life



## Bored abroad

Jeffrey A Auerbach describes how Britain's imperial administrators lived lives of monotony

## Warrior queen

Catherine Hanley chronicles Empress Matilda's battle for the English throne in the 12th century







“Through sheer force of will, Petra Kelly put green politics on the map. Her success in Germany in the 1980s inspired green parties across the world to shake things up”

*Caroline Lucas, Green party MP for Brighton Pavilion, chooses*

## Petra Kelly

1947-92

Petra Kelly was a German Green politician and activist who co-founded the German Green party. Educated in Germany and the US after her family relocated there, she returned to Europe in 1970. She was elected to the Bundestag in 1983, and became one of the German Green party's leading lights. In 1992, she was shot dead by her partner, ex-general and Green politician Gert Bastian, who then killed himself. She was aged just 44.

### When did you first hear about Petra Kelly?

I first heard of Petra in the early 1980s when she was involved in the founding of the German Green party, and I had the honour of meeting her in the early 90s.

### What kind of person was she?

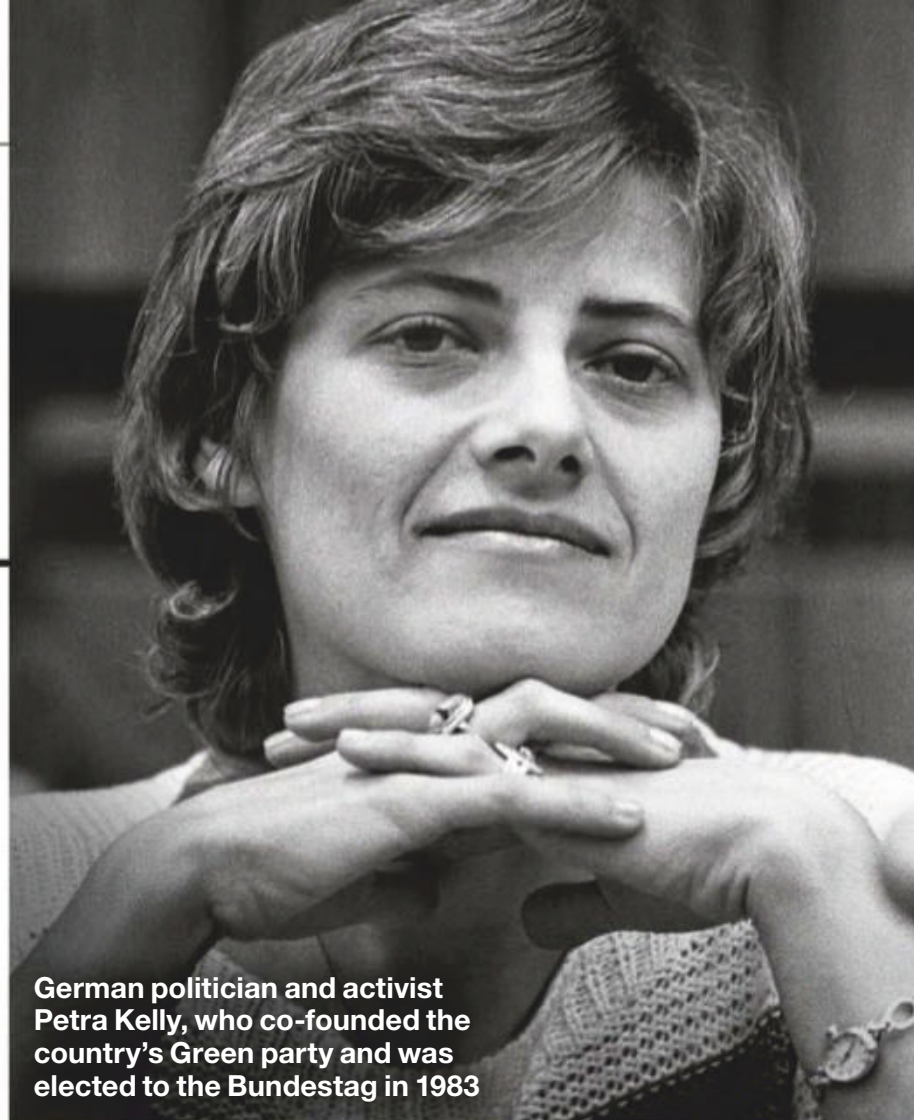
She was absolutely full of energy and life – and a force to be reckoned with. She worked day and night for the causes she cared about, and demanded utter dedication from those around her. I only met Petra once, but got a real sense that she was interested in what I was doing. She emanated a contagious energy and enthusiasm.

### What made her a hero?

She put green politics and environmental protection on the map. Through sheer force of will, she helped the German Greens to succeed, and always tried to keep them radical. Her commitment to non-violence and direct action were a real inspiration. She operated in a world where countries were flexing their military muscles, and she managed to provide an alternative vision of peace-building. She gave the green movement a boost across the world, as she became a figurehead for doing politics differently. Indeed, the Greens' success in Germany in the 80s spurred on other environmental parties across the world to enter parliaments and shake things up.

### What was her finest hour?

Her work on opposing nuclear power in Germany was groundbreaking – and she was a leader in mass protests against nuclear



German politician and activist Petra Kelly, who co-founded the country's Green party and was elected to the Bundestag in 1983

weapons in the early 80s. To oppose nuclear weapons at that time, when the western media was full of communist scare stories, was incredibly brave. Another high point was in 1982, when she won the Right Livelihood Award for her work on peace, ecology, feminism and human rights. Her commitment to a politics that combined these elements was a real inspiration to me, as was the way she always focused on the next battle.

### Is there anything you don't particularly admire about her?

The flipside of Petra's dedication was a complete inability to stop working, and she was known to make big demands of those around her. I imagine it might not have been all that easy to work for her.

### Can you see any parallels between her life and your own?

Petra was an international superstar, and a real giant in green politics, so I wouldn't compare myself to her. What does unite us is being elected as early representatives for our parties, and dedicating ourselves to fighting for planetary protection.

### If you could meet her, what would you ask?

I truly wish Petra was still alive, and still feel so sad and angry about her terrible murder. If she were here, I'd ask her for some of her energy! Sometimes it can feel awfully lonely – as well as utterly exhausting – being the only MP from my party in parliament. I think the fire in Petra's belly would be hugely energising. **H**

*Caroline Lucas was talking to York Membery*

**Caroline Lucas** is a former leader of the Green party. She has been the member of parliament for Brighton Pavilion since 2010, when she became the Green party's first MP

### DISCOVER MORE

#### LISTEN AGAIN

► Hear Caroline Lucas discuss Petra Kelly on Radio 4's **Great Lives:** [bbc.co.uk/programmes/b010xzzw](http://bbc.co.uk/programmes/b010xzzw)







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Enigma, the German cipher machine used during World War II

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